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Secret deals in arms and bananas that condemned a man to exile

Downing Street meeting sealed dissident's fate

GOLIN BROWN, PATRICK COCKBURN, STEVE CRAWSHAW, and PHIL DAVISON

Two secret deals that secured arms deals worth billions of pounds and provided foreign aid to the Caribbean island of Dominica lay behind Britain's decision to expel the dissident Saudi Mohammed al-Masari.

A deal was agreed between the Prime Minister of Dominica, Edison James, and Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, at a meeting in Whitehall on 18 December which led to Dominica offering political asylum to Mr Masari.

The island was assured that its bi-lateral aid from Britain would be restored from around £500,000 in 1994-5 to around £2m this year and next year, which will assist the ravaged banana industry on which the island's economy largely rests.

While the Overseas Development Administration insisted there was no link between the extra aid and Mr Masari's expulsion, the rest of the ODA budget suffered a 5.4 per cent cut in November's Budget.

The decision to expel Mr Masari was taken after the Saudis threatened British firms with the loss of billions of pounds of business in arms contracts in the £20bn Al Yamamah deal signed by Baroness Thatcher in the mid-1980s.

Shares in companies involved in Saudi arms deals, including British Aerospace, Vickers and GEC, all rose on the back of City speculation that the Saudis would now lift the block on the contracts.

The decision was taken at an informal meeting in Downing Street shortly before Christmas involving the Prime Minister, the Foreign Secretary, Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, and Ian Lang, the President of the Board of Trade. John Major acted after being

personally asked to expel Mr Masari by King Fahd, head of the Saudi royal family in Jeddah on 18 September, 1994, and again by Prince Sultan, the Saudi defence minister, in October last year at the 50th anniversary of the UN in New York. Other Cabinet ministers were also pressed to expel Mr Masari.

"He hasn't done anything illegal but he was the cause of acute embarrassment," said one Whitehall source. "We were getting a lot of alarmist messages from British companies about the Saudi contracts."

The Saudi royal family was targeted by Mr Masari, head of a group known as the Committee for Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR), based in north London in a campaign alleging corruption in the Saudi government.

He had been imprisoned and allegedly tortured before fleeing via Yemen to Britain where he claimed asylum in 1994. Last year, Britain tried to expel him to Yemen, but it was blocked by an independent adjudicator. Sources said Britain has since been looking for a country to take him, where his safety would be guaranteed.

"Dominica has had a lot of aid and they offered to help," said the source. "They do not have the problem of trade links with Saudi." Ministers believe a fundamentalist Islamic nation will admit Mr Masari, who is fighting expulsion.

Dr Saad Faqih, a Saudi dissident closely associated with Mr Masari, said that he understood the willingness of Dominica to receive him, because of British support for its banana exports to the European Union. Dominica, which has a population of 75,000, is deeply impoverished and is largely dependent on the sale of its bananas which are threatened by exports from Latin America.

The Home Secretary, Michael Howard, signed his expulsion papers before he left for India. Ann Widdecombe, Home Office minister, made no attempt to conceal the importance of the Saudi export orders. "We have an extremely difficult balancing act. We have close trade relations with a friendly state who have been the subject of very consistent criticism from Mr Masari and we have got enormous export considerations, British job considerations and we have therefore tried to find a solution which satisfied both sides," she said.

A ministerial source said: "It was made clear to him that if he would keep a bit quieter, there was every chance that nothing would happen. But this guy went out and said: 'Mr Masari was measured in his criticism of the Government yesterday. It's very disappointing. The British Government has become very sensitive to commercial pressures. We felt that an old established government would have sufficient identity to forgo one or two deals for the sake of its own dignity.'"

The Home Office yesterday quoted a paragraph which has never been used before, but which provides for the fact that "If the Secretary of State is satisfied that there is a safe country to which an asylum applicant can be sent, his application will normally be refused without substantive consideration of his claim to refugee status."



Mohammed al-Masari: Dominica gets aid in exchange for asylum Photograph: Brian Harris

Tories charged with appeasing Saudi rulers

LOUISE JURY

The deportation decision on Mohammed al-Masari provoked angry reaction from civil rights groups and Labour politicians. However, some Tory MPs and City sources were quick to defend the Government's move as protecting British interests.

The leader of the Muslim Parliament of Great Britain, Dr Kalim Siddiqui, said the deportation decision was a blatant Machiavellian move by the Government to appease the princes of Saudi Arabia.

He added: "I hope Mr Masari's appeal succeeds. But if he is eventually deported, the Muslim community in Britain will ensure that the work of the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights continues. The topping of the Saudi regime is a cause supported by many Muslims in Britain and throughout the world."

But Sir Ivan Lawrence, Tory chairman of the Commons home affairs committee, defended the decision. "We have to strike a balance. Most people would say that if foreigners want to come to this country they are very welcome, but they can't use this country as a base for causing a great deal of ill-feeling to friends," he said.

"We have not sent him back to Saudi Arabia, where he might be banged up or worse, and if he doesn't want to stay in Dominica, that is fine. There are plenty of other countries that he might, as a fundamentalist, wish to go to. We cannot allow our friends to be insulted by somebody who has come

here simply to make mischief." A City expert said the deportation order was good news for GEC and British Aerospace which have been negotiating various major equipment sales to the Middle East. "Clearly it will be seen as very important news for these important contracts," he said.

Mr Masari's actions prompted warnings as recently as November that millions of pounds in arms contracts and other exports were at potential risk from his campaigns.

Doug Henderson, Labour's home affairs spokesman, said he had written to Ann Widdecombe, the Home Office minister, "to seek assurances... that proper procedures have been followed and that Mr Masari has received the same consideration as any other person applying for asylum in this country. In addition, I have also asked why Dominica has offered asylum and what the... terms of the arrangement are".

Ken Livingstone, whose constituency includes Mr Masari's home, said: "Once you have accepted someone has the right to be here, you cannot then impose on their free speech and human rights."

Claude Moraes, of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants, said it was an extraordinary case. "I believe Ann Widdecombe has set the most dangerous legal and political precedent in the area of asylum. In our view, she has gone further than any other immigration minister in clearly stating that we would make an asylum decision on the basis of our trade and arms interests."

Stock Exchange chief ousted in coup



Michael Lawrence: 'Deeply unpopular' City outsider

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

Michael Lawrence was sacked as chief executive of the Stock Exchange yesterday after the City's powerful share-dealing firms staged a dramatic coup.

The topping of a man described as a deeply unpopular outsider in the Square Mile sent shock waves through financial markets, coming just two years after his predecessor was also forced to quit.

His departure is certain to provoke outrage at the rewards top executives receive for failure. Having accepted a £100,000 bonus less than a year ago for the "achievements" in

his first year in office, Mr Lawrence is likely to walk away with a severance payment of more than £300,000. Including the bonus, he was paid £422,000 in the year to last March and enjoyed a one-year rolling contract.

He came to the Stock Exchange two years ago from the Prudential, Britain's biggest institutional investor, where he developed a reputation for enjoying his high earnings. A pilot and yachtsman, he celebrated his move to the Stock Exchange by buying a red Aston Martin car from the actor Rowan Atkinson.

The sacking could also undermine London's status as

Europe's financial centre. Mr Lawrence has been trying to push through far-reaching changes to the way shares are traded in the City, changes that many of the biggest dealing firms fear could threaten their profitable existence.

The Stock Exchange's plans to introduce a computerised order-matching system rather than the current regime in which market makers promise to buy or sell shares at a given price has been seen as an affront to one of the City's most powerful self-interest groups.

Market makers are the direct descendants of the jobbers who ruled the Exchange floor only a decade ago before Big Bang

and who naturally do not want to see themselves replaced by a blinking cursor on a computer screen. There was ill-concealed glee at the departure of a man many in the City viewed as arrogant and condescending.

Labour's City spokesman, Alistair Darling, demanded a full explanation "to prevent lasting damage to the reputation of the City".

He said: "The fact that Michael Lawrence has gone signals deeper problems at the Stock Exchange than they are admitting. It is fairly well-known that he wanted to pursue radical changes within the Stock Exchange and that he was being resisted."

"He had only been at the Stock Exchange for a comparatively short period and his sudden departure clearly indicates that something is going wrong."

John Kemp-Welch, a senior partner of the blue-blooded stockbroker Cazenove and now chairman of the Stock Exchange, tried to play down the impact of Mr Lawrence's departure.

"While Mr Lawrence's departure reflects the loss of confidence in him by the board, it does not imply any change in the Stock Exchange's policy. Our objective is to be the market of choice," he said.

Power struggle, page 16

IN BRIEF

Ice-cream inquiry
Executives of Bird's Eye Walls could face criminal prosecution after allegations that they misled a Monopolies and Mergers Commission investigation into the ice-cream market. Page 5

South Africa triumph
South Africa won the fifth Test - and the series - by defeating England's cricketers by 10 wickets in Cape Town. Page 24



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The TV parts that black men can't reach

PETER VICTOR

The multinational brewing giant Heineken was at the centre of a race row last night after it said there were too many "negroes" in the audience of a new television show it is sponsoring.

Hotel Babylon, a youth culture and music show is being produced by Planet 24, the television company set up by Sir Bob Geldof to launch the Big Breakfast. The new show will be broadcast tonight on ITV by Granada Television.

Plot editions of the show featured Dani Behr, a former presenter on the "youth" show *The Word*, announcing live mu-

sic acts like soul singer Seal and the reggae artist Shaggy from a mock hotel bar, with Heineken products on display.

But last month Justus Kos, from Heineken's sponsorship department at its head office in Amsterdam, faxed Planet 24 demanding more "Heinekenizing" of the show. "More evidence of beer is not just requested but needed."

His 20 December fax also criticised studio audiences: "The audience should be aspirational but not too much on the edge. There was a too high proportion of negroes. Although the audience group seems to be a mixture, director and/or cam-

era crew have a tendency towards selecting just extravagant people. Also "normal" people should be filmed."

The fax from Heineken - advertising slogan: "refreshes the parts other beers cannot reach" - also called for "less men drinking wine, preferably masculine drinks like beer, whisky".

Sir Bob Geldof, a founder and major shareholder in Planet 24, yesterday said Heineken could "go fuck themselves" as far as he was concerned: "I heard about the infamous fax and I hooted with derision. It is our programme, not Heineken's..."

Bernie Grant, Labour MP for

Tottenham, wrote to Heineken this week demanding an explanation for the fax: "This is a reflection on the privatisation of television where increasing amounts of airtime are devoted to private productions," he said. "Inevitably, powerful multinational sponsors will seek to influence editorial control. One can't help being deeply concerned when this influence has a racist guise."

Last night Karel Vuursteen, chief executive of Heineken worldwide, reacted to the fax with dismay. Replying to Bernie Grant, he said: "Having read the original, only one thing can be said about it: it should never have been written. I am truly shocked about the content of the paragraph you refer to, since it is totally against everything Heineken stands for. Heineken denounces all discrimination and will live up to that. I hope you can accept my sincere apology and I can assure you that proper steps will be taken to prevent recurrence."

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news

The expulsion of Al-Masari: Repeated high-level warnings from kingdom sealed fate of a 'thorn in the side'

Saudi threats forced Britain's hand

COLIN BROWN
and MICHAEL SHERIDAN

"He is a thorn in our side," said one ministerial source yesterday of Mohammed al-Masari, the Saudi dissident, who has been running a campaign from Britain against the Saudi authorities.

Thousands of jobs were at risk. "The Saudis felt extremely strongly about him. Every time a meeting has taken place, he has been at the top of the agenda. It was damaging our exports and there came a point when we realised it was becoming deeply embarrassing."

The Saudi government made it clear that it wanted Mr al-Masari expelled. While it was not explicit that more orders would be signed if Britain bowed to the pressure, ministers were left in no doubt that fresh deals would be made easier.

In the offing were lucrative contracts for British Aerospace Hawk trainer jets. Vespene Thorncroft is bidding for the supply of minehunters, and there is the long-term prospect of replacing the ageing Tornados which formed the bulk of the bulk of the Al Yamamah armaments programme signed

by Baroness Thatcher in the 1980s.

"It is much more likely we will win more orders. That was the main stumbling block," said the source. The Saudi royal family could not understand why British ministers did not act more directly in expelling the dissident as they had requested on numerous occasions.

The power of the Saudi royal family is rumoured to have been felt by the British Government a number of times.

King Fahd raised the matter in private meetings with both Douglas Hurd and his successor as Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind. Senior Conservative sources believe the Saudi government objected directly to Downing Street when Mr Major, after his general election victory in 1992, appointed Malcolm Rifkind, a Jew, as Defence Secretary responsible for the on-going arms deals with the Saudis under the Al Yamamah armaments programme.

To the surprise of many, Jonathan Aitken, a leading Euro-sceptic, was promoted from the backbench to be defence minister directly responsible for the Al Yamamah deal.



King Fahd (left) made clear



was also felt when Malcolm Rifkind (right) a Jew, became



Defence Secretary in 1992

He was an expert in the Middle East and trusted by the Arabs.

The sensitivity of the Al Yamamah programme has been underlined by diplomatic effort put in by senior British ministers. Mr Major visited Riyadh in September, 1994. He took with him a team of leading British businessmen, including Howard Davies, then director general of the CBI, and Sir Ralph Robins, chairman of Rolls-Royce.

leg of a trip to India and Oman. Mr Aitken was also there for the signing ceremony.

Mr Major also included a visit to Saudi Arabia to discuss the Al Yamamah programme in September, 1994. He took with him a team of leading British businessmen, including Howard Davies, then director general of the CBI, and Sir Ralph Robins, chairman of Rolls-Royce.

Downing Street yesterday confirmed that the Saudi demands for the expulsion of Mr al-Masari were then raised at a brief meeting with Mr Major.

Mr Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, is believed to have been pressed further on the matter when he visited Riyadh last November. Prince Sultan, the Saudi defence minister, also raised the issue with Mr Major

at the UN's 50th anniversary in New York.

Senior bankers and businessmen say they had received clear indications that the interests of British companies would suffer as a result of Mr al-Masari's activities, while Foreign Office officials blandly asserted in public that no linkage had been established.

The British ambassador in Riyadh, David Gore-Booth, whose job is partly to reflect such views back to London, is thought consistently to have urged a tough line against the dissidents and he had, unusually for a diplomat, made public attacks on Mr al-Masari.

"It had reached the stage where it had become acutely embarrassing. Every time there was a meeting, this was raised," said the ministerial source. "It was made clear to him that if he would keep a bit quieter, there was every chance that nothing would happen, that if he kept his head down, everyone would settle down. But this guy went over the top."

Mr al-Masari had performed a careful balancing act to stay within the law while directing a stream of intemperate propaganda by fax from London.

But it was no coincidence that two days after a change at the top in Saudi Arabia the British government decided to act. The handover of power on New Year's Day from the ailing King Fahd to his heir apparent, Crown Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz, triggered a rapid set of decisions by the Foreign Office and the Home Office. The accession generated a rapid consensus in Whitehall that the moment had come to act.

The central dilemma of British policy towards Saudi Arabia remains unresolved, as it was towards the Shah's Iran in the 1970s. The Labour government of the period agreed with the Embassy in Tehran that British commercial interests dictated support for the Shah and hostile indifference to his opponents. After the Islamic revolution of 1979, British influence and business in Tehran collapsed.

The ambassador at the time, Sir Anthony Parsons, later confessed the errors of his policy in a memoir entitled "The Pride and the Fall". It is not known whether this volume is on the reading list for ambassadors to Riyadh. But perhaps it ought to be.

IN BRIEF

First internet

child-porn jailing

A father of two from Solihull, West Midlands, yesterday became the first person in Britain to be jailed for receiving child pornography through the Internet.

Martin Crumpton, 44, a former computer consultant, was jailed for three months after admitting six charges of being in possession of indecent pictures of children. He had admitted the specimen charges at a preliminary hearing in December, when his case was adjourned for pre-sentence reports. His arrest followed Operation Starburst, an international police crackdown last July.

John Davies, for the prosecution, had told Birmingham magistrates that Crumpton had admitted possessing the pictures out of a "morbid curiosity". A police expert found three files on his computers holding 119 pictures. The majority were indecent photographs of children, some only six years old. Fergal Blecker, for the defence, said: "Over a short period of time, due to considerable financial difficulty and death within the family, he has become withdrawn."

Woman froze

A 39-year-old woman who disappeared in the middle of a birthday celebration was found dead on land near to the restaurant where she was last seen. Sharon Hammond, of Fleet, Hampshire, died from hypothermia, according to a post-mortem examination yesterday. She vanished from Bluebeard's Restaurant in Chobham, Surrey, last Friday while celebrating with 40 friends and relatives.

Fry's mates again

The long-running legal wrangle between Stephen Fry and the producer of the play *Cell Mates*, which closed when Fry fled to Europe, has been settled. Fry has not had to pay the £500,000 compensation demanded by producer Duncan Weldon and has made a token payment of £20,000. Insurers have paid Weldon £255,000 after seeing a psychiatrist's report on Fry.

Ecstasy victim

Helen Cousins, 19, who spent 24 hours in a coma after taking an ecstasy tablet at a New Year's Eve party, was making a good recovery in hospital in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, and may be discharged at the weekend. Her parents yesterday issued a plea for young people not to take drugs, while police were waiting to interview Helen and said they were pursuing new leads in their hunt for the dealers who supplied the drug.

Vauxhall pay plea

Union leaders at Vauxhall urged the management to reopen negotiations after employees voted by three to one to reject a three-year pay offer of 4.5 per cent this year and a rise matching inflation in the following two years, plus a one-hour reduction in the 39-hour working week.

New union chief

The Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union announced that Ken Jackson had been elected its new general secretary. He said the union would be "flexing muscles" in pursuit of more training for young people and a shorter working week which would protect jobs.

TV Ten beats Nine

ITN's *News at Ten* said it outperformed the BBC's *Nine O'Clock News* last year with an average audience of 6.6 million, versus 5.7 million for its rival.

Safeway cuts prices

Safeway is to slash prices on more than 70 best-selling products by a third during January, the supermarket chain said yesterday. The move comes in the same week that Sainsbury's announced a January Savers promotion which it claimed could save shoppers £20 on a typical checkout bill of £70.

Rough for Diamond

Anne Diamond, the TV presenter, yesterday lost her bid for the Stratford-upon-Avon FM radio licence to The New 102, chaired by Louise Boting, ex-presenter of Radio 4's *Money Box* programme.

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BACK ISSUES
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PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

Even if Britain goes ahead and deports him, Mohammed al-Masari may not spend much time on the little Caribbean island of Dominica. In fact, he may have trouble getting off the plane.

Dominica's former prime minister Dame Eugenia Charles, shocked by her successor Edison James's decision to accept the Saudi dissident, said yesterday she would organise a protest at the island's only airport - in the capital, Roseau - to prevent Mr Masari from disembarking.

"Even this man himself [Mr Masari] seems surprised that our island has been selected for his deportation. Money must have changed hands. I can only assume the Dominican government has received some financial benefit from Britain in return for accepting this man," the 76-year-old former premier told *The Independent* in a telephone interview. "The Saudis may want to chop off his head."

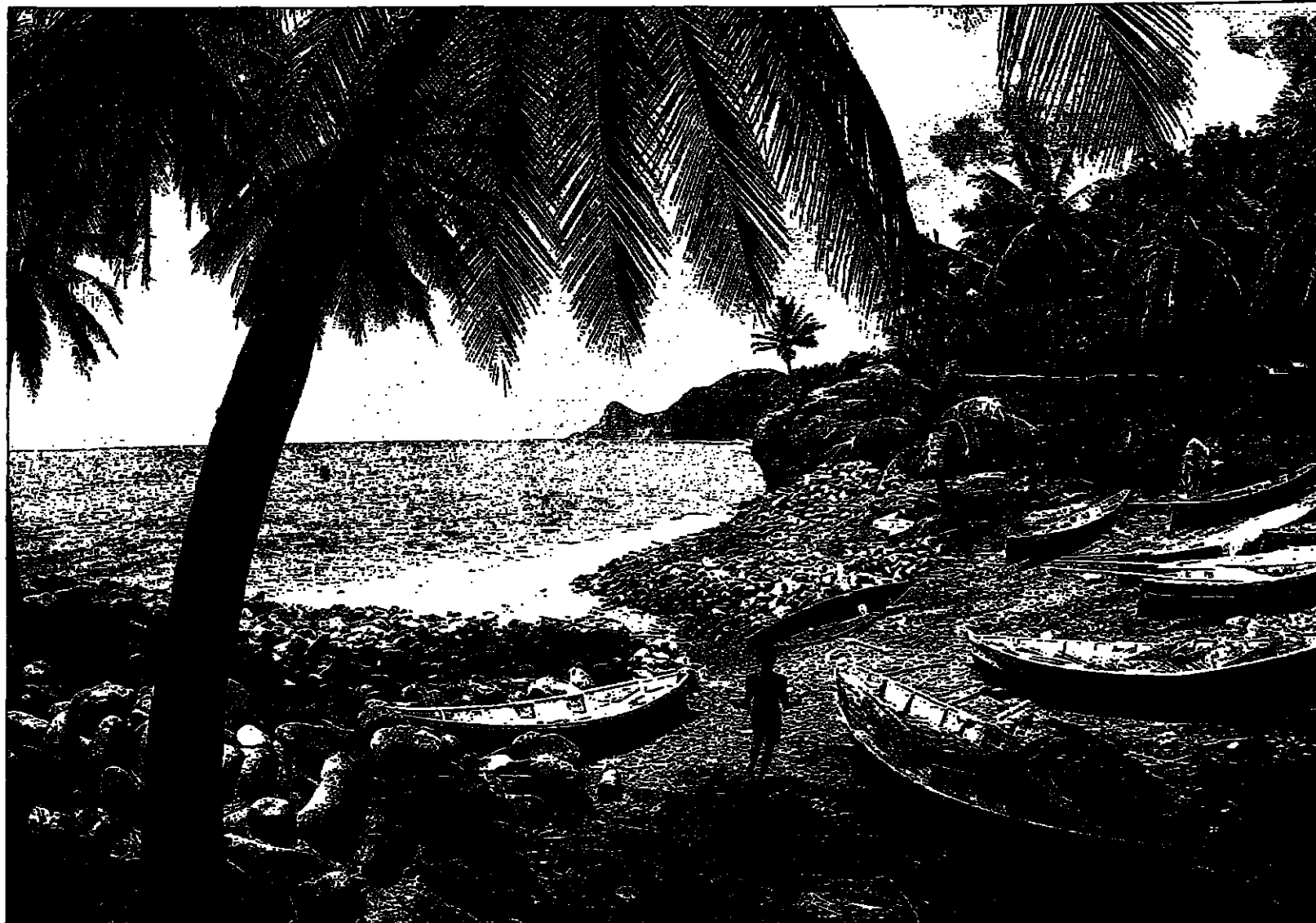
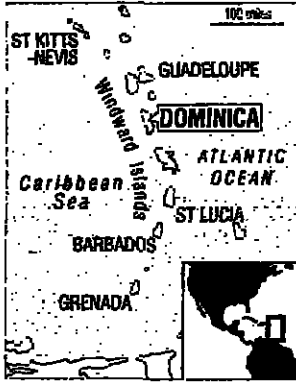
ISLANDERS' REACTION

We'll just chop off his stay," Dame Eugenia, the Caribbean's first woman prime minister when she took power in 1980 - she ruled until last year - reflected the surprise of most of her countrymen and women at the news they first heard on the BBC World Service yesterday morning. The general reaction was: "Why us?"

Dominica gained independence from Britain in 1978. Mr James promised to explain his decision to his 88,000 countrypeople last night. In the meantime, the pending arrival of a radical Muslim and outspoken dissident was the biggest thing to hit Dominica since twin hurricanes Luis and Marilyn zapped the Windward Islands last September, wiping out 90 per cent of the banana crop.

Locals on the strongly-Catholic island joked that Mr Masari would be the most unwelcome visitor since 3 November, 1993. That was when Columbus landed, a year after his initial discovery of the Americas. Alongside the island's mainly-black population, there are still several hundred descendants of the Carib Indians who watched Columbus come ashore.

Bananas and coconuts represent more than half Dominica's exports of around \$60m (£40m). Caribbean nations have been piggy-in-the-middle in a trade war between the US and Europe over banana quotas, with US banana barons opposed to Europe's favourable treatment towards its former colonies.



Making waves: News of Mohammed al-Masari's arrival was the biggest thing to hit Dominica since hurricanes Luis and Marilyn last year

Dissident with reputation as 'royal pain in the neck'

STEVE CRAWSHAW

Mohamed al-Masari, a 49-year-old former professor of physics at King Saud University in Riyadh, is not everybody's favourite politician.

But yesterday, many analysts of the region were shocked at his expulsion. One specialist on Saudi Arabia spoke of "a very clever, very pragmatic man". Another talked of "a shameful day for Britain".

Malcolm Rifkind, the Foreign Secretary, was scathing in his assessment of Mr Masari in an interview with *Al-Hayat* last year: "From what I know of Mr Masari's views, he sounds like someone who carries no weight at all in the United Kingdom or in Saudi Arabia. The views that he has expressed appear to me to be very bad for the people of Saudi Arabia... He represents a small group that, so far as we can tell, speaks for no-one and represents no-one."

Mr Masari has run an extremely effective human rights organisation known as the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR) which operates from Willesden, in north-west London. The group concentrates its energies (and funds) on faxing dissident material into Saudi Arabia, including a weekly newsletter which claims a readership of 300,000.

Mr Masari has also published studies of corruption among Saudi princes in state organisations, including a recent study on the prospective privatisation of Saudi, the national airline. "The CDLR has certainly had an impact in letting people know what is really happening," said Aburish, the author of a book on Saudi Arabia.

The high-profile activities of the CDLR - unstoppable, in the communications age - enraging the Saudi regime. But the British government was indignant, too, when Mr Masari appeared to condone the bombing in Saudi Arabia in November of a building used by US forces.

Mr Masari himself later insisted that his words had been taken out of context. He claimed he did not himself see the US forces as a "legitimate

PROFILE

But he also noted, during a visit to Saudi Arabia in November: "We take actions against people on the basis of their deeds, not their opinions... If people have opinions, we may disapprove of them of dislike them intensely, but our society is such that that is something which is tolerated. No longer, it seems."

In the words of one analyst, "Masari's a nuisance, a pain in the neck. He's not offensive. But his attitudes are much more nuanced than the British Government seeks to suggest."

Mr Masari runs a human rights organisation, the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights (CDLR). The CDLR's main call is for "the immediate and unconditional release of all political prisoners", and "freedom of speech and assembly and the right to choose accountable leaders".

Between May and September of that year, more than 20 people, mostly university academics, were arrested and detained. Amnesty labelled them prisoners of conscience, a category

only applicable to those who have not advocated violence. Mr Masari was among those held and allegedly tortured.

The CDLR transferred its operations to London in April 1994. Mr Masari sought political asylum in the UK, which the British were reluctant to grant from the start.

In March last year, a judgment by the Immigration Appeals Tribunal overturned the Government's attempt to send Mr Masari back to Yemen, which the British Government had declared to be a safe third country. The tribunal disagreed.

Defenders of Mr Masari argue that, even if he has some dodgy Islamic friends, this is only to be expected when groups of different views band together against a single, unwanted regime.

London has never argued that the Saudi regime is democratic - only that it is important as a partner.

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London has never argued that the Saudi regime is democratic - only that it is important as a partner.

Riyadh pressured defence firm

TRADE THREAT

RUSSELL HOTTEN

Vickers, the United Kingdom defence group, said yesterday that it warned the Government of the threat to trade with Saudi Arabia because of the activities of Mohammed al-Masari, the London-based Arab dissident. The company said it was under no pressure from Riyadh to act, but admitted that his removal could help clear the way for important UK defence deals.

Other companies have privately admitted to telling the Government of their concern that the Saudis were deliberately holding up contracts until Britain curbed the dissident's activities. Shares in leading UK defence companies rose as City investors speculated that the Saudis would lift a block.

Saudi Arabia is Britain's biggest market in the Middle East, and according to latest figures bought £1.5bn of UK goods in 1994. But that figure is set to rise following a deal signed in 1985 under which Britain supplies the kingdom with arms worth £20bn.

Some of the UK's leading industrial giants feared that the second part of this huge arms deal, known as Al-Yamamah 2 and worth £5bn, could be jeopardised because of Saudi anger. About 70,000 jobs here are dependent on Al-Yamamah contracts. But yesterday GEC, the defence electronics giant, and Rolls-Royce, the engine manufacturer, declined to comment. British Aerospace, which is leading Al-Yamamah, said it had not made formal representations to the Government.

Dissident group

Freephone numbers - which usefully leave no trace on Saudi phone bills - mean that monthly telephone bills can be as much as £27,000. The faxed newsletters include highlights from the British press about the goings-on of Saudi royals.

There is even a "Prince of the Month" column, which exposes different members of the royal family.

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Dissident group

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Japanese troops to be trained in Britain

RICHARD LLOYD PARRY and CHRISTOPHER BELLAMY

Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, is to invite members of the Japanese armed forces for training in Britain in an effort to overcome Tokyo's long-standing aversion to deploying its troops overseas. The decision is likely to cause an uproar among veterans of the war against the Japanese in the Far East. Selected Japanese officers have been trained at British staff colleges for years,

but the appearance of a contingent of Japanese troops will be more emotive.

"I would say 'no'," said Keith Syler, a veteran of the Burma campaign who has worked with men who were Japanese prisoners of war. "I'm not at all happy about having Japanese soldiers here. One forgives a lot but the way they behaved was abominable."

During a four-day visit to Japan which begins tomorrow, Mr Portillo and his opposite number, Seishiro Eto, will dis-

cuss a scheme to train members of the Japanese Self-Defence Forces (SDF) at the Ministry of Defence's urban warfare training school in Warrminster. The programme will begin later this year and will draw on British expertise in internal security and peacekeeping operations acquired in Northern Ireland and the former Yugoslavia.

Apart from the financial contribution which Tokyo will make towards the cost of the training, the scheme is seen by British officials as a useful step towards

Japanese participation in multinational military operations.

The country's post-war constitution technically forbids the maintenance of armed forces. After prolonged and agonised debate, Japan dispatched policemen to the UN operation in Cambodia, and will this year send a token force to the Golan Heights. But Tokyo's reluctance to take a bigger responsibility for global policing, despite enormous economic strength, has caused resentment in the UN and hampered

its bid for a permanent seat on the Security Council.

According to British diplomats, Mr Portillo will lend his support to Japan's Security Council aspirations on the understanding that it gradually assumes a greater peace-keeping role. "He isn't going out there with a shopping list," said an adviser to Mr Portillo. "But a year from now, when the situation in Bosnia has settled down, it's likely that the Japanese will contribute money and personnel."

British defence minister to visit Japan since 1973. In meetings with the Foreign Minister, Yohsei Kono, as well as Mr Eto, he will also discuss Asian regional security, particularly that of China and North Korea, and the possibility of increased British arms sales in Japan.

Notably absent from the public agenda, although no doubt the subject of private discussions, will be the embarrassing issue of compensation to former British prisoners of war. A group of PoWs is suing the

Japanese for individual compensation of £14,000.

Mr Portillo will lay a wreath at the Commonwealth War Cemetery in Yokohama, but is unlikely to repeat the outspoken eulogy of the "proud and erect" veterans of the war against Japan which formed part of his speech to the Conservative Party conference.

Proposals by the Japanese to defuse the row by setting up a fund for veterans' organisations have been abandoned for fear they would be rebuffed.

Since the debate last August, when then Japanese prime minister, Tomichi Murayama, sent a letter of apology for Japanese atrocities to John Major, which he later appeared to retract, both governments have agreed that the issue is best left alone to solve itself as the number of surviving PoWs dwindles.

Mr Syler said he could think of half a dozen people who would oppose Japanese troops training here: "I've seen what they suffered and are still suffering, physically and mentally."

Scots toffs do gentlemanly battle over title claim

A government minister and his banker cousin appeared before an ancient heraldic court yesterday to settle an aristocratic squabble which dates back to the 17th century - who should become the 11th Earl of Selkirk.

Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, the Scottish health minister who sits in the House of Commons, claimed the title and the £500,000 of family heirlooms that go with it, when his uncle, George Douglas-Hamilton, the 10th Earl of Selkirk, died in 1994.

But days later he renounced the House of Lords honour because, he said, he did not want to resign from the Commons and force a by-election threatening John Major's majority. He retains the courtesy title "Lord" as the son of a duke.

After his sacrifice, the title lay vacant. Lord James, 53, assured relatives that it would stay in the immediate family when he died, passing to his 17-year-old son, John Andrew. But the old Etonian's plans were upset when his cousin Alasdair Douglas-Hamilton challenged his right to be ennobled.

Alasdair, 56, argues that he, and not Lord James, is the

rightful heir to the earldom. Late last year he lodged his claim at the Court of the Lord Lyon in Edinburgh, set up in 1672 to settle genealogical disputes north of the border.

Although the two cousins have avoided all but the most gentlemanly exchanges on the subject, the internal conflict in Scotland's most important aristocratic family has captivated polite society, anxious to see battle joined in court.

The pinstripes of Scotland's "hooray Hamishies" were on bold display yesterday as the Lord Lyon, Sir Malcolm Rognvald Innes of Edingight, began to hear the evidence. Through his counsel, Alasdair Douglas-Hamilton argued that a 300-year-old family document proved that he should inherit the title.

The document, known as a diploma, is contentious. Not only is it written in Latin, making it inaccessible to all except classical scholars, but there is doubt over its true meaning. It was drawn up by the first Earl of Selkirk, William Douglas, after his family was joined with Scotland's other great aristocrats, the Hamiltons, when he



Relative merits: Lord James Douglas-Hamilton (left), who is defending his families right to the crest of the Earl of Selkirk against his cousin, Alasdair Douglas-Hamilton

married Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, in 1656.

Marriage meant that William became Duke of Hamilton as well as Earl of Selkirk. He thought it was wrong that one man should hold both titles and through the diploma he ensured that in future the earldom

would always go to the younger brothers of the Duke of Hamilton.

And so it did until 1994 when George Douglas-Hamilton died. His title could not revert to his brother, former Tory MP Lord Malcolm, because he was dead - the victim of a plane



crash. As the younger brother of the current Duke of Hamilton, Angus, Lord James Douglas-Hamilton, concluded the earldom was his.

In court yesterday, however, counsel for Alasdair argued that the diploma made it clear that the succession should pass

along the line of brothers - and, if necessary, sons of brothers - until the line was exhausted. As the son of the late Lord Malcolm, he, and not Lord James, was entitled to the honour.

But counsel for Lord James said it was wrong to skip a generation; the title should rest with

the man known in the Scottish Office as "the gent". After the hearing the two men insisted they were "still friends".

"What is important is that this business is sorted out absolutely and amicably," Lord James said. Judgment is expected in

April. Whoever loses is likely to appeal to the Court of Session, Scotland's highest civil court, and, if necessary, to the House of Lords.

For Lord James, the case could end in the place he sought to avoid when he renounced the title two years ago.

Two youths arrested after doorstep killing of teenager

WILL BENNETT

A man and a teenage boy were arrested yesterday by police hunting a gang who killed and beat a teenager to death outside his home as he tried to stop them taunting his father.

Anthony Erskine, 19, a quiet and slightly built shop assistant, was set upon in Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, on Wednesday evening and suffered appalling facial injuries.

The teenager, who had intervened peacefully to stop the gang hunting insults at his father, Harry, died almost immediately under a hail of blows. His family have been repeatedly persecuted by youths who set fire to their hedge and threw paint over their car.

Yesterday afternoon, police wielding sledgehammers smashed their way into a house only 30 yards from the Erskines' home and arrested two males, one aged 20 and the other 15. A third man, aged 17, who was arrested shortly after the attack, was released on police bail.

The death of Anthony, who was well liked and was regard-



Anthony Erskine: Tried to stop gang taunting father

ed as a model employee at Debenhams department store in Stratford-upon-Avon, where he was a stockroom assistant, left his family stunned and disbelieving.

Ian Erskine, his twin brother, who has vowed never to cel-

brate their birthday again, said: "My family and I were devastated at the sudden and unnecessary death of my brother Anthony which has completely destroyed us."

"Anthony and I were very close. He was a quiet and gentle brother, loved by all his family and friends and all who knew him."

"The police's job is only really just beginning so I beg anyone who saw what happened or who knows anything or has been told anything that might assist the police to come forward as soon as possible."

Then in tears he added: "This is not a petty murder or a petty crime. My brother was murdered and no-one deserves any loyalty after that."

Shortly afterwards Ian screamed and lunged at the mother of one of the suspects when he met her by chance in Stratford-upon-Avon police station. He was restrained and police officers led the shocked and crying woman into another room.

Gary Erskine, 22, Anthony's other brother, said: "All he was

doing was trying to help his dad. Within 60 seconds of them kicking him and punching him, he was lying on the floor."

"The argument was about nothing at all. They were just looking for a bit of fun, they go out and cause trouble. They were just pushing him around and swearing at him for a laugh."

"Anthony just went outside to calm them down. He never hurt anybody. He had been picked on before and he always took the peaceful option, always tried to calm it down."

Gaynor Taylor, a neighbour, ran to try to help when she heard about the attack. She said: "There was no pulse and his face was a mask of blood. It was very dark and his face had been so badly kicked in there was no way I could have given mouth to mouth."

Nick Bond, another neighbour, said: "The family would never argue back even though they were victimised."

"They would just try to get on with things as best they could. Their hedge was even set on fire and paint was thrown on their car."

Boy, 15, held over teacher's murder

JASON BENNETT
Crime Correspondent

A 15-year-old boy was being held in custody last night after being arrested in connection with the murder of Philip Lawrence, the headmaster who was stabbed outside his school.

The youth was seized at an address in Kenilworth, north London, and questioned at an unnamed police station in the centre of the capital.

He was also arrested in connection with an alleged assault on a juvenile. This is believed to be the 13-year-old pupil whom Mr Lawrence was trying to protect from a gang of youths when he was murdered outside St George's Roman Catholic School in Maida Vale, north-west London, last month. The teenager, who is not a

pupil at St George's, was detained at 9.35am. Further arrests are expected. Police described yesterday's development as "very significant".

Mr Lawrence, 48, died on 9 December, 12 hours after receiving a single stab wound to the heart. Police believe he was killed after a dispute between two teenage gangs.

The youth being held can be detained for 24 hours before police must charge or release him. Alternatively they can obtain a 12-hour extension from a senior police officer, but he can only be held after that with the approval of a magistrate.

Detectives investigating the murder have spent the Christmas period working through dozens of statements and earlier in the month travelled to Paris to question a witness.

Serial killer link to Celine is ruled out

WILL BENNETT

Detectives investigating the murder of Celine Figard, the French student whose naked body was found near Worcester, said yesterday that they did not believe she was the victim of a serial killer.

They also asked the public to look out for a bottle of champagne which Celine, 19, was given during the journey to England.

Detective Chief Superintendent John McCammon, leading the murder inquiry, said: "I would stress that at this stage there is no firm evidence whatsoever to link Celine's murder with any other investigations."

He said he was concerned by press speculation that the murder of Celine, who was beaten around the head and stran-

gled, might be connected with the killings of several other women, most of them prostitutes, and that a serial killer might be responsible.

A three-day meeting of officers from nine police forces, held in December, to discuss the murders, had decided it was "most improbable" that the cases were linked.

He said Celine had been given a bottle of Pascal Chretien champagne as a gift in France on her way to England. He continued: "This particular type of champagne is not exported to anywhere in the world outside France and is not sold in this country. It is a 1993 vintage and only 60,000 bottles have been produced."

He asked anyone who had seen such a bottle to contact the police.

"BEFORE ACCEPTANCE AS A SUITABLE RISK TO THE PRIVATE MEDICAL INSURANCE POLICY, THE SAID PATIENT IS CONTRACTUALLY OBLIGED TO SATISFACTORILY COMPLETE A MEDICAL EXAMINATION AS CARRIED OUT BY THE PATIENT'S GENERAL PRACTITIONER OR BY AN INDEPENDENT MEDICAL EXAMINER AS APPOINTED BY THE INSURER. IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE POLICY RULES, IT IS ALSO MANDATORY THAT THE SAID MEDICAL EXAMINATION BE CARRIED OUT IN THE UNITED KINGDOM IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE GUIDELINES AS LAID DOWN BY THE BRITISH MEDICAL ASSOCIATION. PENDING RECEIPT OF THE AFORESAID MEDICAL EXAMINATION REPORT IN TRIPLICATE AND IN CONJUNCTION WITH FORM VB12394, AND THAT'S THE AMENDED 1994 VERSION, THE PATIENT SHALL BE LIABLE FOR ALL FISCAL RETIBUTION TOWARDS THE COST OF ALL TREATMENT INCLUDING IN-PATIENT TREATMENT, OUT-PATIENT TREATMENT, CONSULTATIONS, DIAGNOSTIC TREATMENT AND ALSO TREATMENT BY SPECIALIST. THE PATIENT WILL ALSO BE LIABLE FOR THE EXPENSE OF ANY TREATMENT OF ANY PRE-EXISTING CONDITION NOT SPECIFIED DURING THE COURSE OF THE MEDICAL EXAMINATION AND DIAGNOSED PRESENT AT ANY TIME WITHIN FIVE YEARS PREVIOUS TO THE DATE OF ACCEPTANCE OF LIABILITY BY THE INSURER. PAYMENT OF ANY CLAIM IN REGARD TO ANY PRE-EXISTING CONDITION DIAGNOSED PRESENT PRIOR TO FIVE YEARS PREVIOUS TO THE DATE OF ACCEPTANCE OF LIABILITY BY THE INSURER SHALL BE SUBJECT TO THE DISCRETION OF THE INSURER. THE AGREEMENT WILL BE SUBJECT ONLY TO THE DISCRETION OF THE INSURER. THE INSURER WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE COST OF ANY TREATMENT OF ANY PRE-EXISTING CONDITION DIAGNOSED PRESENT PRIOR TO FIVE YEARS PREVIOUS TO THE DATE OF ACCEPTANCE OF LIABILITY BY THE INSURER. THE AGREEMENT WILL BE SUBJECT ONLY TO THE DISCRETION OF THE INSURER. 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news

'He scarcely reacted as the details of the alleged multiple murders were given'

STEPHEN WARD
Legal Affairs Correspondent

Britain's first war crimes prosecution began in Surrey yesterday as Szymon Serafinovich, 85, stood in the dock accused of the murder of Jews in German-occupied Eastern Europe more than 50 years ago.

One of the four charges, relating to an alleged shooting in October 1941 in the village of Turets, Belarus, was dropped yesterday by the prosecution at the start of committal proceedings at Dorking Magistrates' Court.

The charges that the defendant from Banstead, Surrey, still faces are firstly that on 4 November 1941 in Turets he murdered an unknown Jew in circumstances constituting a violation of the laws and customs of war, contrary to common law. The second and third charges are similar, relating to killings in the town of Mir on 9 November 1941, and nearby Krynitzne, between 31 December 1941 and 1 March 1942.

Seated in the dock yesterday, Mr Serafinovich wore a short fur coat over a check shirt, pullover and corduroy trousers. Only his head, with his white hair and gaunt cheeks, could be seen above the dock rail.

When asked to confirm his name by the court clerk, he had to ask her to speak louder. He still has a pronounced accent, but a firm voice, despite his physical frailty.

He scarcely reacted as the details of the alleged multiple murders were given, occasionally turning as if to hear better, as John Nutting QC opened the case for the prosecution.

Mr Nutting, who had to struggle with the pronunciation of place-names in four lan-

guages, was surrounded at times by maps of the country, then a part of the Soviet Union invaded by the Nazis.

Reporting restrictions were not lifted yesterday for the first case to come to court under the 1991 War Crimes Act, which made it possible to try people in Britain for murder or manslaughter in German-occupied territories even if they were not British at the time of the Second World War.

A huge debate surrounded the Act, concerning the morality and practicality of trials in which all witnesses and defendants are in old age. No other cases have been brought, despite a massive police investigation.

Mr Serafinovich, who worked as a carpenter after arriving from England during the war, was arrested and charged in July 1995, and is allowed to continue living at his home on bail on condition that he does not attempt to obtain a passport.

He has been granted legal aid, and retained counsel, William Clegg QC.

This hearing will be one of the last "old-style" committal hearings where the defence can ask for witnesses to appear in person for cross-examination. The procedure is due to be abolished in favour of the procedure already common where magistrates assess from the statements on paper whether there is a strong enough case to commit for trial at a Crown Court, or in this case the Old Bailey.

The hearing was adjourned until 19 February. Witnesses to the alleged crimes will come to Dorking from London, Poland, Israel, Russia, Belarus, South Africa, the United States, Canada and Australia.



War charges: Szymon Serafinovich leaving his home in Surrey for court yesterday

Photograph: Photopress

How men of Boxgrove ate raw rhino

TOM WILKIE
Science Editor

Britain's oldest known inhabitant was a right-handed chinless wonder who killed and ate rhinoceroses and horses - raw.

The Natural History Museum in London yesterday put on public display for the first time the 500,000-year-old remains excavated at Boxgrove in West Sussex over a period of 10 years and at a cost of more than £1m.

To the untrained eye, the oldest human fragments found in Britain are meagre: one shin bone and two front teeth. But the Boxgrove people also left a litter of flint hand-axes and animal bones from which the team of scientists have been able to deduce a wealth of detail about what the earliest Britons looked like, and how they lived.

Dr Simon Parfitt, from the Institute of Archaeology at University College London, said: "We think this was a waterhole, not a permanent site. They came to the waterhole to kill animals, cut them up and take them away." The inhabitants of Boxgrove had a diet rich in red meat. The scientists have found more than 300 bones from rhinoceroses, deer, bison and horses at the site.

The Boxgrove people lived when the climate was warmer than it is today, so that rhinoceroses and other creatures long since extinct in Europe were common.

Dr Parfitt said that although many parts of rhinoceros skeletons had been found at the site,

"all the limb bones have been taken away, presumably because they had large amounts of meat on them. It was a very precise butchery sequence. Unburied. They'd taken their time and knew what they were after." The limb bones of the horses were also missing. So far there is no evidence that the meat was cooked.

The plentiful carnivorous diet contradicts some popular notions that early hunter-gatherers had to go for long periods subsisting on berries and roots leavened with shellfish and the very occasional binge on meat.

The two human teeth found in August and October last year fit together so precisely that the researchers believe they must be from the same individual, but not the owner of the shin bone which was found at a slightly higher level.

From the evidence, Dr Chris Stringer, principal scientist of the human origins programme at the Natural History Museum, believes that the Boxgrove remains represent specimens of Homo heidelbergensis - a predecessor of the Neanderthals. One archaic feature of these remains is that although they had massive jaws they had no chin.

The key to a definitive identification would be to find the lower jawbone from which the two front teeth have fallen out. But, Dr Stringer said, English Heritage, which has financed the excavations so far, had not yet decided if it could afford to support more activity this summer.



On the bone: A scientist with one of the 500,000-year-old bones found at Boxgrove

Photograph: Edward Sykes

Radio researchers 'lose' 4m listeners in new system

MARIANNE MACDONALD
Media Correspondent

The company set up to measure audiences for BBC and independent radio has pledged to continue with its new system of audience measurement - even though it has apparently mislaid about 1 million listeners each from Radios 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The slump occurred when Radio Joint Audience Research (Rajar) changed its methodology toward the end of last year. Instead of asking 50,000 representative listeners to write by hand the names of the stations they listened to in the previous week in "listening diaries", it introduced lists of stickers pre-printed with station names.

The move was aimed at simplifying the diaries following the increase in radio stations. But it had a different effect. Unpublished results from Quarter Four - 18 September to 17 December, when the methodology was first used - are understood to show Radios 1, 2, 3 and 4 to have lost one million weekly listeners each.

This amounts to an 8 per cent drop from the previous quarter for Radio 1; 12 per cent for Radio 2; 38 per cent for Radio 3; and 11 per cent for Radio 4. Curiously, Radio 5 was barely affected and retains almost all its 4.8 million audience.

Drastic falls also occurred in the commercial sector. Virgin, Classic FM and Talk Radio are said to have lost about 700,000 listeners each - a 19 per cent drop for Virgin, 18 per cent for Classic FM and 30 per cent for Talk Radio. Rajar admits the slump is due to the new system. A statement said: "A key problem has been isolated as a failure by respondents to stick in sufficient labels."

The problem is that the new system apparently fails to acknowledge listeners who tune in only briefly to stations or listen involuntarily. But it has infuriated the radio industry, which relies on audience figures to pull in advertising. Radio One even threatened to pull out of Rajar. But, despite pressure to revert to the old system, Rajar refuses to change.

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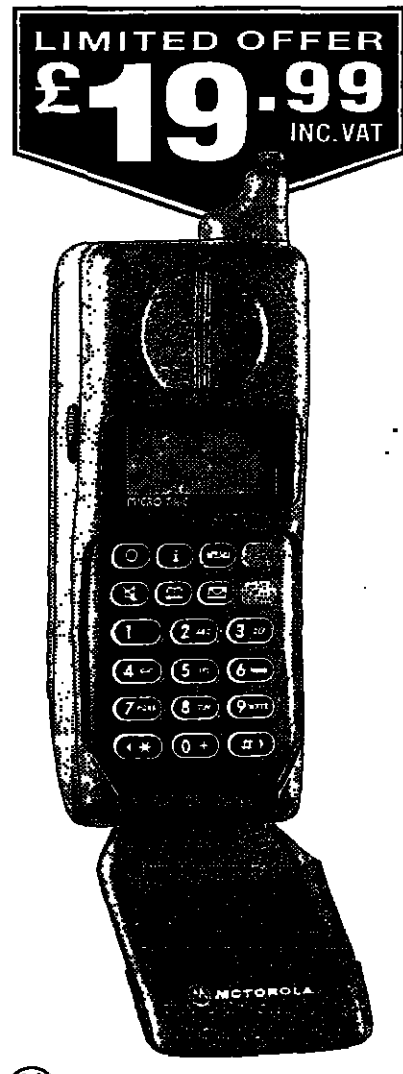
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We would like to invite you to France for a bargain break - a day trip with a car plus five passengers for just £10.

We have teamed up with P&O European Ferries to offer readers of The Independent a range of sailings departing from either Dover or Portsmouth which may be taken until April 2, 1996.

The Dover destination is Calais and the Portsmouth sailings will arrive at Cherbourg and Le Havre. Both towns are ideal for shopping, sight-seeing and gourmet eating and would make excellent bases for a short stay.

Day trip departures from Sunday to Fridays, until 15 February, 1996, cost £10 for a car and up to five passengers. Each extra passenger costs £1 and foot passengers also pay just £1.

Day trip departures from Portsmouth on Friday nights and Dover on Saturdays cost £20 for a car and up to five passengers. The cost of extra passengers and foot passengers remains unchanged.

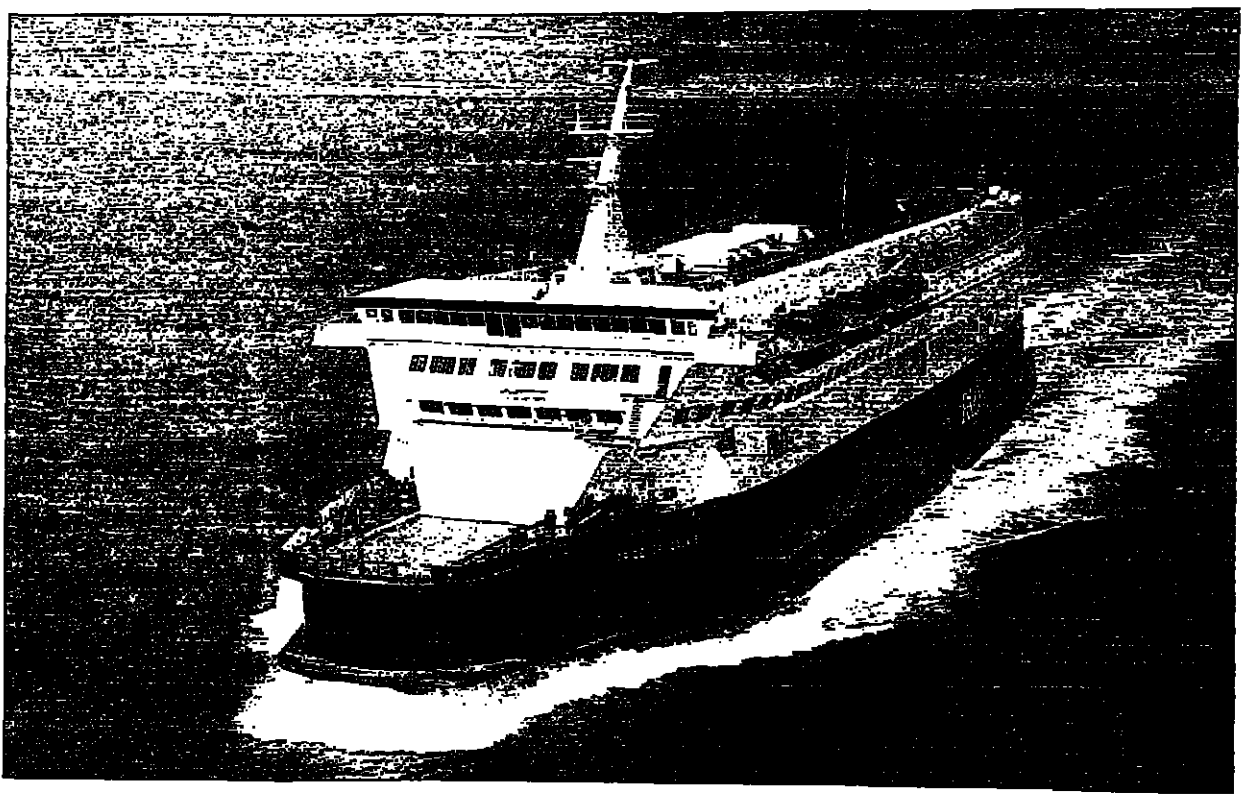
Sailings from 16 February up till 2nd April, 1996, are £10 per car and £1 per passenger or £20 per car and £1 per passenger for Saturday sailings from Dover or Friday night sailings from Portsmouth.

If you prefer to make an overnight stay in France, the cost of a 60-hour excursion is £39 for a car and up to five passengers. Extra passengers pay £4 each. Friday night departures from Portsmouth and Saturday departures from Dover are subject to a £10 surcharge. These prices do not include accommodation.

To qualify for these bargain prices you must collect four differently numbered tokens from the six we are publishing this week. Today we are publishing token five and we will give full details of how to take advantage of this offer, along with your final token, tomorrow.

Full terms and conditions of this daytrip offer will appear on the P&O European Ferries Booking Request Form which will appear tomorrow. The offers

are subject to availability for tickets within the The Independent's readers allocation. A day return is defined as follows: Dover/Calais route, return departure must be before midnight on the day of departure. From Portsmouth, return departure must be within 24 hours of leaving the UK.



Angry admiral brands Portillo 'a little creep'

PETER VICTOR

Michael Portillo, the Secretary of State for Defence, was branded "a little creep" yesterday by a retired Sea Lord enraged by the impending sale of some of Britain's great and historic naval monuments.

Admiral of the Fleet Lord Hill-Norton fiercely criticised plans to dispose of the Royal Naval College at Greenwich, the Old Admiralty and Admiralty Arch.

"I trust those nearer the seat of power will put up a robust defence. Admiralty Arch is an extremely historic building and Old Admiralty even more so. It contains the Nelson Room and the Admiralty Boardroom, both of which are intrinsic parts of our maritime heritage. I would have thought that even a little creep like Mr Portillo would have understood that."

Lord Hill-Norton, Chief of the Defence Staff 1971-74, said he was not surprised by reports that estate agents had been asked to value Admiralty Arch, coming after the announcement of the sale of the Royal Naval College.

In a reference to spending cuts at the Ministry of Defence, he said: "If you reach a situation, which we have reached, where defence is run by the Chancellor of the Ex-

chequer, this is what you expect." Lord Hill-Norton's comments came as reports circulated of the sale of Admiralty Arch, possibly to a foreign buyer, for up to £5m.

The MoD has invited estate agents to value the arch, which serves as a portal to the Mall and has a superb view down the Mall to Buckingham Palace on one side and of Trafalgar Square on the other.

Two years ago MoD staff vacated the arch, which was built in 1910 as part of the Queen Victoria memorial scheme. But it still contains the official residence of the First Sea Lord, at present Sir Jock Slater.

With the Royal Naval College the arch holds great historical significance for navy personnel, who are furious about the proposed sales.

The 18th-century Old Admiralty, which is in Whitehall, saw the planning of Britain's naval strategy against France. In 1806, Nelson's body was kept there overnight before being taken to St Paul's Cathedral.

The Royal Naval College has been linked with the Navy for 300 years, first as a naval hospital and later as a training college. Nelson's body lay in state there after Trafalgar, and it was where the Duke of York and the Duke of Edinburgh received their naval education.

A spokesman for the Department of the Environment, which is responsible for empty government buildings, said that the estate agent Knight Frank had been asked to come up with proposals for the future of Admiralty Arch.

Schemes could include: "Anything and any kind of private finance initiative," he said. It was also possible that another government department could take it over.

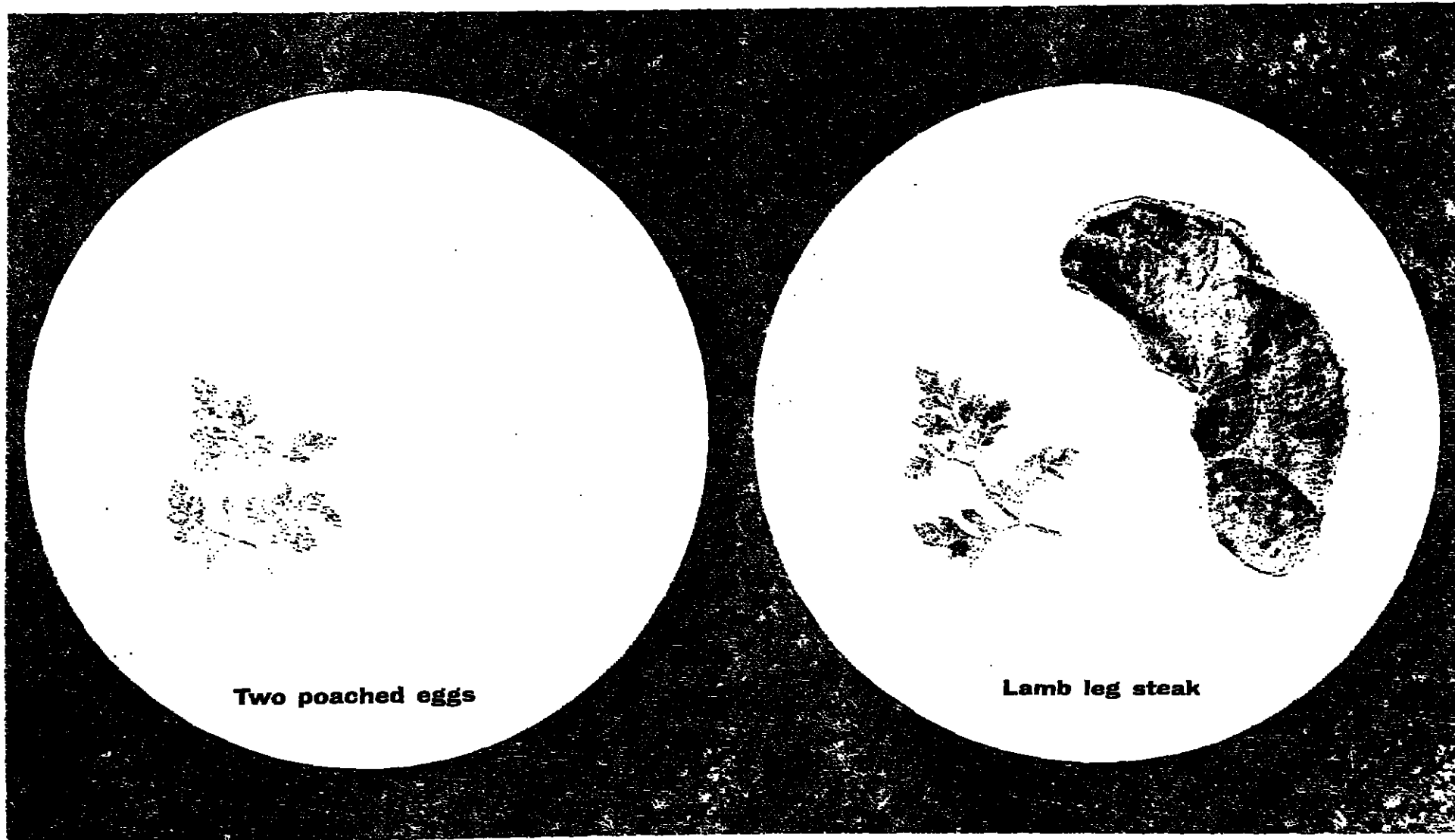
An MoD spokesman said it would not comment on Lord Hill-Norton's remarks.

"This was said by somebody who is not now party of the ministry and we don't make any reaction to discourtesies of that kind."



Life at the end of the pier: Mike Paxman, an engineer, and his dog, Diesel, on Colwyn Bay pier in North Wales. Mr Paxman and his wife, Ann, bought the derelict pier in 1994 and are transforming it to its former glory. The initial phase of the £3m project is due for completion in March. Photograph: Steve Peake

Which one has less fat?



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Who'd have thought that 100g of luscious, lean, trimmed lamb leg steak could contain just 9.4g of fat compared with the 10.8g found in two poached eggs (100g)?

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MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND FOOD, APPROVED STUDIES.

Ice cream wars inquiry 'misled' by Bird's Eye

DAVID HELLIER

Executives of Bird's Eye Walls, a subsidiary of Unilever, could face criminal prosecution as a result of allegations that they misled the Monopolies and Mergers Commission in the early 1990s in its investigation into the ice cream market.

It is believed that after a nine-month inquiry, John Bridgeman, director general of the Office of Fair Trading, has concluded that a prima facie case exists to pursue the case.

The OFT's report has been sent to the Department of Trade and Industry, which will make a final recommendation on prosecution, according to this week's *Economist* magazine. If Ian Lang, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, approves a prosecution it will be the first such case under the 1973 Fair Trading Act, which has penalties ranging from a fine to a two-year jail sentence.

Unilever, which has a 70 per cent share of the £250m UK market for wrapped ice cream products, said yesterday that it had been informed that the OFT had completed its investigation and that the relevant papers and documents had been passed on to the Department of Trade and Industry.

The allegations that executives had misled the MMC came from Unilever's competitors after the MMC concluded that Unilever's huge share of the ice cream market did not depend on any unfair trading practices.

According to the *Economist*, the MMC agreed to this conclusion after receiving Bird's

Eye's assurances that the firm had not forced retailers to buy supplies only from its distributors, rather than independent wholesalers.

The MMC's report noted that Wall's had explicitly confirmed that "retailers were under no contractual obligation to obtain supplies exclusively from concessionaires" and that it had taken steps to "assure itself" that no pressure was being brought to bear on retailers to buy only from concessionaires.

According to the *Economist*, the OFT has concluded that these statements were untrue and that the Wall's executives who made them must have known they were untrue.

The MMC agreed to allow the company to continue to apply a condition that shops stock only Wall's brands to its loans of freezer cabinets. But the MMC agreed to this only after receiving the firm's assurances that Wall's had not sought to force retailers to buy supplies only from its distributors, rather than independent wholesalers.

"From discussions our lawyers have had with the OFT, we do not believe that any decision to prosecute has been taken," a Unilever spokesman said yesterday. "The OFT has not given any indication to us or any other party as to what conclusions they may have reached. In the light of this and given that the OFT has made no public statement any suggestion or implication that Bird's Eye Walls will be prosecuted is wholly without foundation."

The OFT said it had passed its report to the DTI but would make no further comment.

DAILY POEM

A 14-Year-Old Convalescent Cat in the Winter

By Gavin Ewart

I want him to have another living summer,
to lie in the sun and enjoy the douceur de vivre -
because the sun, like golden rum in a rummer,
is what makes an idle cat un tout petit peu ivre -

I want him to lie stretched out, contented,
revelling in the heat, his fur all dry and warm,
an Old Age Pensioner, retired, resigned
by no one, and happinesses in a beelike swarm

to settle on him - postponed for another season
that last fated hateful journey to the vet
from which there is no return (and age the reason),
which must soon come - as I cannot forget.

Poems on the Underground celebrates its 10th anniversary this month and Gavin Ewart's *Convalescent Cat*, which first appeared in 1991, is one of a series of six poems for the new year to appear on London Underground's 4,000 Tube trains. The anthology of *Poems on the Underground*, published by Cassell, is now in its fifth edition, having sold a remarkable 153,000 copies in the last four years, and poetry is now displayed on the public transport systems of New York, San Francisco, Dublin, Paris, Stuttgart and Oslo.

This poem first appeared in *The New Ewart Poems 1980-82*, published by Hutchinson. Gavin Ewart died in October 1995.

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Call for tougher action to cut urban sprawl

NICHOLAS SCHOON
Environment Correspondent

Britain's cities and towns will become increasingly sprawling and suburban in character, in spite of recent government policies intended to safeguard remaining countryside from development, two researchers warned yesterday at the Royal Geographical Society's annual conference in Glasgow.

The environmentalists' and the Government's shared desire to have compact high-density cities – more European than American in character – with highly efficient, well-used public transport systems squeezing out the private car, would not be realised without far tougher policies, Michael Breheny, a town planner, and Ian Gordon, a geographer, both of Reading University, said.

The move out of town that has already taken place, growing reliance on the private car and people's demand for more personal space as they became more affluent were all spreading Britain's urban areas more thinly, they said.

John Gummer, Secretary of State for the Environment, has said he wants to halt the spread of out-of-town shopping centres.

Last year the Government produced planning guidance for local councils which asks them to refuse permission for large new commercial and leisure developments which can only be reached by private car.

His overall aim is to plan towns which cut the need to travel by private car to work, shop and play, thereby controlling pollution and congestion.

At the same time, the Government is wrestling with the problem of where to house more than 3 million new households expected to form between now and 2011. In last year's housing White Paper, the Government said that by 2005 half of all new homes should be built on reused land. "All these policies are well-meaning, even radical," Professor Breheny said. "But they will make little difference without deterring private car use more directly."

The researchers say there is a strong case for building new houses on derelict sites. For these tend to be in the big conurbations which are often suffering population decline and where the social infrastructure of schools, shops and hospitals already exists.

But the demand for new homes is often low in these areas and they are the last places where commercial house-builders want to build. Instead, demand is at its highest in smaller towns where there are few derelict sites and intense local opposition to new homes in the countryside or on playing fields and allotments. Places like Reading and Milton Keynes have had very rapid household growth over the past quarter-century and the children who grew up in them will fuel more growth for the next few decades.

"For some counties like Cambridgeshire, it probably will be an unfolding nightmare," Professor Breheny said. The researchers believe that if the target for building on derelict sites is to be hit there will have to be strong incentives for house-builders. "They will resist to the last," Professor Breheny said. Having examined data on fuel prices and urban densities in 32 cities around the world, they also believe higher petrol taxes can achieve far more than town planning.

"The planning system can only deliver limited things very slowly. Doubling the price of petrol could have a much greater effect," they conclude.

Final tribute to knife-attack police officer



Last respects: Police officers stand in line to remember PC Hammond after the funeral service in Dulwich yesterday Photograph: Edward Webb

A police officer who spent five months in a coma after being stabbed in a sweets shop raid was buried with full service honours yesterday at St Stephen's Church, Dulwich, south-east London.

Top police officers attended the funeral of PC George Ham-

mond, who never fully recovered from the injuries he received 11 years ago when he tackled a teenager with a knife.

The Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Paul Condon, and his predecessor, Sir Peter Imbert, headed a group of senior officers at the funeral,

followed by a private burial at Camberwell Old Cemetery.

Mr Hammond was 47 when he chanced across a robbery as he stopped to buy some cigarettes on his way back to Peckham police station.

He was stabbed in the stomach with a 10-inch knife as he

tackled Christopher Ogletton, 17, who had just robbed the shopkeeper of £7. Ogletton was later sentenced to nine years' youth custody.

Mr Hammond lay in a coma for five months, had five major operations and needed a kidney transplant and a heart bypass

operation. Mr Hammond, a father of three, returned to desk duties 17 months after the attack, but was never able to return to full duties and retired from the force in 1990.

He died last month in King's College Hospital, London, at the age of 58.

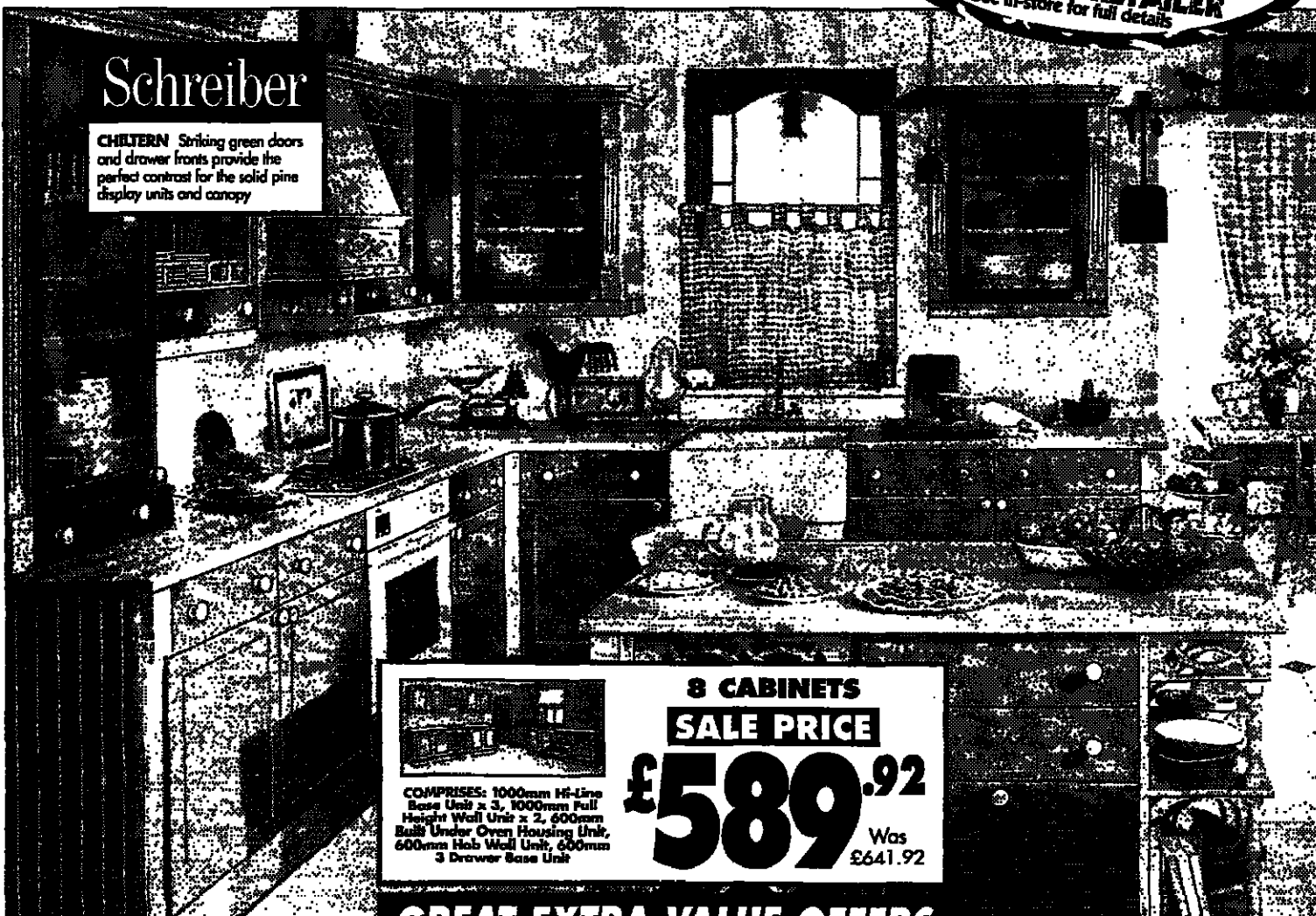
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BBC steps up security to protect lottery draw

REBECCA FOWLER

The BBC has introduced extra security measures to protect the studio which broadcasts the National Lottery draw, which this week sees a record jackpot of £35m.

The organisers are determined that the National Lottery Live show – which is expected to attract record viewers and may even overtake the 23 million who watched the Princess of Wales's interview – should not be disrupted.

The studio was closed off yesterday and only a handful of personnel who work there were allowed in. Extra security guards have been brought into the Television Centre to protect it, the invited studio audience has been vetted and issued special passes, and there is an emergency contingency plan.

"We want to make sure there are no problems, because someone might just be loopy enough to try something," the BBC said. The special operation to

protect the draw has been overseen by Neil Dickens, director of security for Camelot, the lottery operator. He will also organise the transportation of the coloured balls for the draw, currently sealed away at a separate location from the machines, which are in storage monitored by Price Waterhouse, the accountancy firm, at the BBC.

Mr Dickens said: "We have emergency procedures which we have rehearsed in the last couple of weeks just in case anything goes wrong. There are extra machines and there is a secret site on standby in case the draw could not take place at the BBC for any reason."

The National Lottery Live usually attracts audiences of 13 million, but its ratings are expected to rise dramatically this weekend, surpassing the first show, which was watched by 20.2 million.

The record jackpot has already attracted a 40 per cent increase in the sale of lottery

tickets in some outlets and more than nine out of 10 people may play this weekend, which makes it potentially the single greatest collective event in the history of Britain.

Virginia Bottomley, the Secretary of State for National Heritage, yesterday defended the jackpot, which has been fiercely criticised especially by the Church, which condemned it as obscene.

Mrs Bottomley said the size of the prize was part of the fun and attracted more players.

"Because it's a big jackpot this week, something like 15 per cent to 20 per cent more people will play and £5m more is likely to be raised for good causes. That would be enough to refurbish every church in the country," Mrs Bottomley said.

"To reduce the size of the jackpot at the moment, the evidence is that it would reduce the amount coming through for good causes... Nine out of 10 people are likely to play and my sympathies are with them."

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Dr. J. A. K. S. D.

Occupational Psychology Conference: Business counselling 'overrated'

'Quacks' prey on the fears of employers

BARRIE CLEMENT

"Quacks" have moved into the counselling business, wrongly claiming they can mitigate legal action taken by stressed workers against their employers.

Even the most reputable consultants hint that they can help in court cases, but it is not true, according to a consultant business psychologist.

Providers of the so-called employee assistance programmes are taking advantage of growing fears among companies that they can be sued by staff suffering from mental health problems. Carolyn Highley told the annual occupational psychology conference of the British Psychological Society in Easingbourne.

Generally the programmes were "overrated" and were only of real and long-lasting benefit when they were part of a co-

herent attempt by management to change working conditions and organisational culture to minimise stress, she said.

Fears over litigation have grown since a social work manager from Northumberland last year became the first British employee to successfully sue his employer after suffering two nervous breakdowns.

Around 250 British companies have now "bought in" counselling services and the number of major providers has doubled to 15 in three years.

Miss Highley estimated that around 20 per cent of counsellors employed by programme providers were insufficiently qualified. The minimum qualification was the British Association of Counselling diploma which required a year's study.

Around 12 per cent of counsellors had received virtually no training. Among those with no

qualifications were former personnel officers and occupational health nurses.

Much of the advice provided concerned issues that would normally be dealt with by Citizens' Advice Bureaux, including queries on legal and financial matters. Only 22 per cent of the cases encountered in the "bought-in" programmes involved work-related issues, Miss Highley found in her study, which was sponsored by the Health and Safety Executive and carried out at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST).

The counselling programmes normally cost employers around £25 per employee each year, but the price could be anywhere between £15 and £45. Typically the consultants provided a "helpline" and up to eight individual face-to-face sessions.

Where counsellors were inadequately trained they were unlikely to get at the root of the problem. An employee who said he was having difficulties with his wife might fail to mention that he had been working long hours which had caused the problem in the first place.

Miss Highley, who carried out the research in conjunction with Cary Cooper, of UMIST, found that employees who received counselling took sick leave on fewer occasions and felt more healthy.

However, they did not report more job satisfaction or feel less stressed. This suggested that no fundamental change had been introduced. "The programmes work, but in a very limited way. Companies are bringing them in for the wrong reasons. I do think organisations should bring them in, but they ought to be aware of their limitations," said Miss Highley.

Music's symphony for whingers

BARRIE CLEMENT

Beneath the superficial harmony of the typical symphony orchestra, there is a seething cauldron of resentment and antagonism, the conference heard.

As in most organisations, different sections of musical ensembles attracted widely different personalities.

The string players tend to think of themselves as "sensitive, competitive and insecure", while the other musicians regard them as "grumpy, arrogant and weird".

Brass players believe themselves "gregarious, loud and jovial", while their colleagues are slightly more derogatory - seeing them as loud, extrovert, macho beer drinkers.

Perhaps the most pejorative remarks were reserved for conductors. One musician in an unnamed but famous orchestra described them as a "foul breed". They were, "over-paid and short of talent" and it was about time "these expensive front men" were exposed. The



Discord: Conductors (such as Claudio Abbado, pictured) are the musicians most loathed by their colleagues

musician complained that he was paid £82 for a concert while the conductor earned £16,000.

In a paper presented to the conference, Richard Kwiatkowski of the University of East London argued that the

sub-culture of the typical orchestra was increasingly replicated in industry.

Most ensembles were freelance and the musicians were at the beck and call of the "fixer" who decided who was chosen to play in a concert.

"The fixer is all-powerful. Perhaps we are seeing in the orchestra the logical consequences of current theories of future organisations."

Competition is fierce within the orchestra. Mr Kwiatkowski found. Status is denoted by position - the further forward and the closer to the outside, where you can be seen, the better.

"Everyone can hear how well you are performing, and if you are not doing well it is understood that a fellow musician will point this out to the section principal, who will tell the fixer and the next time a concert is being arranged you will simply not be telephoned."

"Thus if your performance is below par, you will lose your livelihood."

Mr Kwiatkowski compared it with the experiences of dockyard workers in the 1930s waiting for work from the foreman. He said the ordinary workplace was now catching up with the way employment has been organised in the performing arts for many hundreds of years.



Trunk call: Dr Peter Holmes on Bredon Hill, looking for signs of the violet click beetle

Photograph: Russell Sach

Happy landing for jumping beetle

RICHARD SMITH

English Nature is set to spend £15,000 planting 300 trees to help save a rare jumping beetle from extinction in Britain.

The money will be used to preserve a Midlands beauty spot which inspired a poem by A E Housman, thereby making it a safe haven for the violet click beetle.

Experts fear that unless such action is taken, the tiny creature will eventually be wiped out on Bredon Hill in Hereford and Worcester - one of its two remaining breeding sites in England.

Until now the beetle has found an ideal home among the ancient ash, field maple, beech and oak trees growing on Bredon's hillside scrub and chalk grassland which has remained unploughed for centuries. But the beetle's lifetime - the next

generation of mature open woodland - is almost non-existent. Many of the trees were old even at the end of the last century, when in Bredon Hill Housman wrote:

*In summertime on Bredon
The bells they sound so clear:
Round both the shires they ring
In steeples far and near.*

*A happy noise to hear
Dr Peter Holmes, English Nature's conservation officer for*



Rare breed: A close look at the violet click beetle

the region, said: "The violet click beetle is so rare that we know little about its lifestyle and the adult has only been seen five or six times. But it seems to live in a soup-like mixture where birds have nested, squirrels have died and fungus grows in hollow trees with leaf litter."

"So much modern woodland is too dense for these invertebrates, but Bredon Hill has been tree-covered for centuries and the landscape profile is the nearest thing we have to an ancient woodland habitat."

"There is also hawthorn on the hill, which provides nectar for these rare species to feed on and a place to meet and mate when they come out of the dead wood in spring."

"But the lack of young trees means the violet click beetle would certainly disappear from Bredon if it was not for the action we are taking now. They

would only survive as long as the current generation of veteran ash."

Most of 380-hectare Bredon Hill is privately owned and English Nature has been working closely with farmers who use it for grazing cattle and sheep. Some ash are being pollarded to hasten maturity and violet click beetle larvae have been found on 17 trees.

Altogether 67 scarce species of beetles, including the rare blood red *amphedrus rufipennis*, have been found on the hillside.

The violet click beetle owes its name to the sound made by a spring-like appendage which enables it to leap a foot high and escape from predators.

The European Union lists the half-inch-long beetle - which is also found in Windsor Great Park - on a directive naming scarce species which are cause for international concern.

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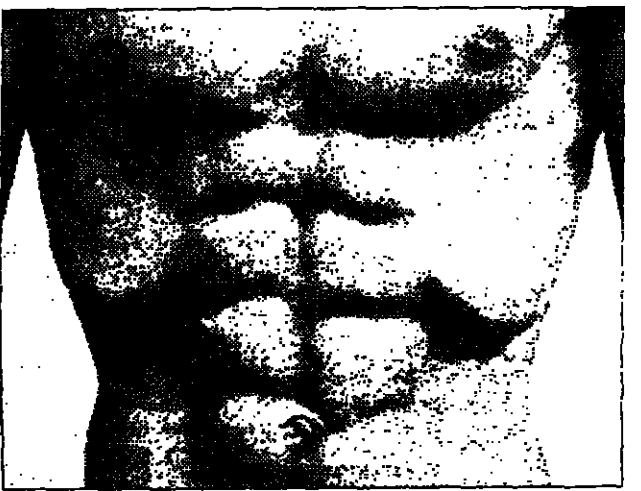
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international

Russian forces 'ignoring nuclear risks'

PHIL REEVES
Moscow

Russia's giant military establishment, long accused by environmentalists of scandalous laxity in its handling of radioactive materials, has come under fire from a top official of the Russian nuclear safety inspectorate, who warns that its sloppy methods and lack of external monitoring amount to an "extreme radiation risk".

In a blistering article in *Izvestia*, Alexander Kanygin, a regional representative with the State Committee for Atomic Safety Supervision (Gosatomnadzor), painted a chilling picture of low safety standards at Russian military installations, singling out a gung-ho attitude to the handling and storage of radioactive waste.

The broadside is the latest skirmish in a war between Gosatomnadzor officials and Russia's powerful generals over the right to monitor the military's efforts to store or dispose of radioactive materials, an issue which has become increasingly critical as the country dismantles its vast and often decrepit Cold War machine.

The scale of the problem became clear in November when Bellona, the Norwegian environmental group, released pictures of dozens of spent fuel containers from an early Russian nuclear submarine, each allegedly as radioactive as last year's first French nuclear test in the Pacific, which have been sitting in a dump near the

Norwegian border for more than 30 years.

In his article, Mr Kanygin, a former Red Army colonel who held a senior post in its radioactive and biological warfare department, accused the military of failing adequately to train staff, protect hazardous materials or analyse potential damage to people and the environment. If radioactive equipment is lost, "nobody looks for it; it is simply written off", he alleged.

Although the military has always staunchly resisted outside inspection, the controversy gathered pace six months ago when President Boris Yeltsin issued a decree stripping Gosatomnadzor of its formal right to monitor the handling of nuclear waste at military installations.

Supervisory duties were transferred to the Ministry of Defence - in effect, allowing the culprits to police themselves. Gosatomnadzor executives were horrified, not least because of the military's dismal standards. Last year their annual safety review (for 1994) of Russia's nuclear sector demanded that the Ministry of Defence stop dumping radioactive waste into the sea, and make immediate improvements across a range of activities, from handling spent nuclear fuel to dismantling decommissioned submarines.

According to Mr Kanygin, Mr Yeltsin's decree had the added disadvantage of allowing the generals to classify all information about potentially lethal

radioactive materials as top secret - including details of the roads along which waste is transported and where it is disposed of. The President's order has created a "dangerous loophole", he said, adding that Russians now face a greater danger from their own army than from any outside enemy. "If there is no strict civil control... many could suffer. The ominous 'X' hour can come."

Although the military seem certain to shrug off his attack, it will serve to confirm the many warnings issued by environmental agencies, which have watched one radiation-related crisis after another unfold in the wake of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Bellona's experience while investigating the scandal of the spent submarine fuel rods underscores Mr Kanygin's complaints about the military's passion for secrecy. The security service, the FSB, raided the group's premises in Murmansk and St Petersburg, seizing computers and documents, and harassed its Russian assistants.

When Greenpeace asked the naval authorities for permission to check radiation levels on publicly accessible land outside the perimeter of bases, the requests were abruptly denied. A Greenpeace spokesman in Moscow yesterday said that the navy used to send its radioactive waste for processing to Chelyabinsk-65, a closed city in the southern Urals, but now lacks the money to do so. "This is a huge problem, which is out of control,"



Snowed under: A Ukrainian soldier at Kiev airport prepares the red carpet for William Perry, US Secretary of Defense, before his arrival yesterday for a two-day visit. Photograph: Yefrem Lukatsky/AP

PEOPLE

Mr Clean washes his hands of Italy

Antonio Di Pietro, the magistrate who began the "Clean Hands" anti-corruption drive in Italy, is washing his hands of his "ungrateful" country. "Now all I want is to be forgotten," he wrote in his column in the magazine *Oggi*. "This was the first wish I put under the tree of the saddest Christmas of my life."

The former Milan prosecutor became a symbol of righteousness when he headed the three-year investigation, in which more than 3,000 politicians, bureaucrats and business people were implicated in corruption, and heads rolled in the Socialist and Christian Democratic parties.

But on 20 December prosecutors asked that Mr Di Pietro be indicted for allegedly extorting favours. He denies any wrongdoing, attributing the charges to a political vendetta. "It is the price I have had to pay for my stubborn determination to proceed with the Clean Hands investigation at all costs," he wrote. "I knew from the start that they would make me pay for it."

A judge is to examine the case next month and decide if Mr Di Pietro should be sent for trial. The allegations have ended his plans to enter politics. "Ours is an ungrateful country," he said. "And even if time proves me right, I have nothing more to say or to give, as a prosecutor or as a citizen."

Christian Brando is to be released from prison next Wednesday after serving nearly five years for killing his sister's lover. "He will be paroled to the Los Angeles area next week," said a spokesman for the California Department of Corrections. "He will, in all likelihood, be picked up privately and go to wherever."

"Wherever" may or may not be the scene of the crime, the home of his father, Marlon. Christian, 37, pleaded guilty to manslaughter in the May 1990 shooting of Dag Drollet, lover of his half-sister Cheyenne, and was sentenced to 10 years.

He had told the court that he had been angry with Drollet for allegedly beating Cheyenne, who was pregnant, and had killed him accidentally in a struggle. Cheyenne later gave birth to a son, who is being raised by Drollet's parents in Tahiti, where Cheyenne hanged herself last spring.

Who's got the cutest dimples in South Africa? No contest, says the South African edition of *Cosmopolitan* magazine, which named Nelson Mandela, 77, the most eligible and sexy man in the country. "Currently divorcing, the world's favourite president is about to become South Africa's most eligible bachelor," the



Mandela: Dimpled favourite of South Africa's 'Cosmo'

magazine said. "He's everything a woman could ever want in a man - mega-powerful, kind, modest, considerate and with a great sense of humour. Not to mention the cutest dimples, the world's most winning smile and funky dress sense."

Magdalena Kopp, wife of Carlos the Jackal, has returned to her home city of Neu-Ulm in Germany and may be ready to testify against him. *Spiegel* news magazine says, Berlin prosecutors are investigating Ms Kopp, who was linked with the Revolutionary Cells terrorist group for almost 20 years, for a suspected role in a 1981 attack against Radio Free Europe.

A spokesman for the prosecutors confirmed they had spoken with Ms Kopp about her own activities but declined to comment on her willingness to testify against her husband, Ilich Ramirez Sanchez, and his deputy, Johannes Weirich, her former lover. Both men face trial for murders and bombings dating back to 1975.

Ms Kopp had been living in Venezuela with her nine-year-old daughter, Rosa, under the protection of her husband's family.

Maryann Bird

China seeks to make the Internet toe party line

TERESA POOLE
Peking

China has wasted no time in adding its voice to international calls to curtail access to information through the Internet.

A joint statement from the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the State Council this week warned that pornography and "harmful materials" had entered cyberspace. "We must take effective measures to deal with this," it declared, giving no indication of what those measures might be.

It was not the first time that China's leaders had admitted concerns about the power of the Internet in an authoritarian society, while also realising that information technology is the key to the country's economic development.

It was only last May that commercial access to the Internet became available in China, provided by the Ministry of Posts

and Telecommunications in an important thing in running newspapers is to uphold the party and political line. "It is not a view that is current among exiled Chinese dissidents as they meet in cyberspace or in the Tibet information news groups."

In June, China's Minister of Posts and Telecommunications, Wu Jichuan, said the government would limit access of Chinese users "to some Internet information". He added: "By linking with the Internet, we do not mean the absolute freedom of information." He did not explain how China might stop it, but did say that foreign firms will continue to be banned from providing information services. Besides fears of free exchange of information, the government is worried foreign information services would quickly grab market share from China's own domestic news agencies.

There are more than 2 million personal computers in China, and the official Xinhua news agency forecast that Internet users would have risen to 100,000 by the end of 1995. Such is the popularity of the Internet that access to the system is now regularly clogged. Under a deal with Sprint, the first quarter of this year will see access capacity tripled in Peking. This year will also see more cities brought on-line.

Even the Chinese government realises that information technology is one of the keys to the country's modernisation, and has earmarked the sector for rapid development - even if it has not quite worked out how it will maintain control. "Good use of the Internet is of great importance to increase global information exchanges, promote economic construction and development science," this week's statement said. It is also good for spreading official propaganda.

Earlier this year, the China Accounting Office teamed up with a Hong Kong company to release the monthly State Statistics Bureau figures and other government information on the Internet "to help the world know more about China".

One answer from Peking's point of view is indirect access, as intended by China Internet Corporation, a company controlled by Xinhua news agency. This Hong-Kong based company will select and translate business and economic information on the Internet and deliver it to corporate subscribers in China.



Jiang: Ordered newspapers to uphold official policy

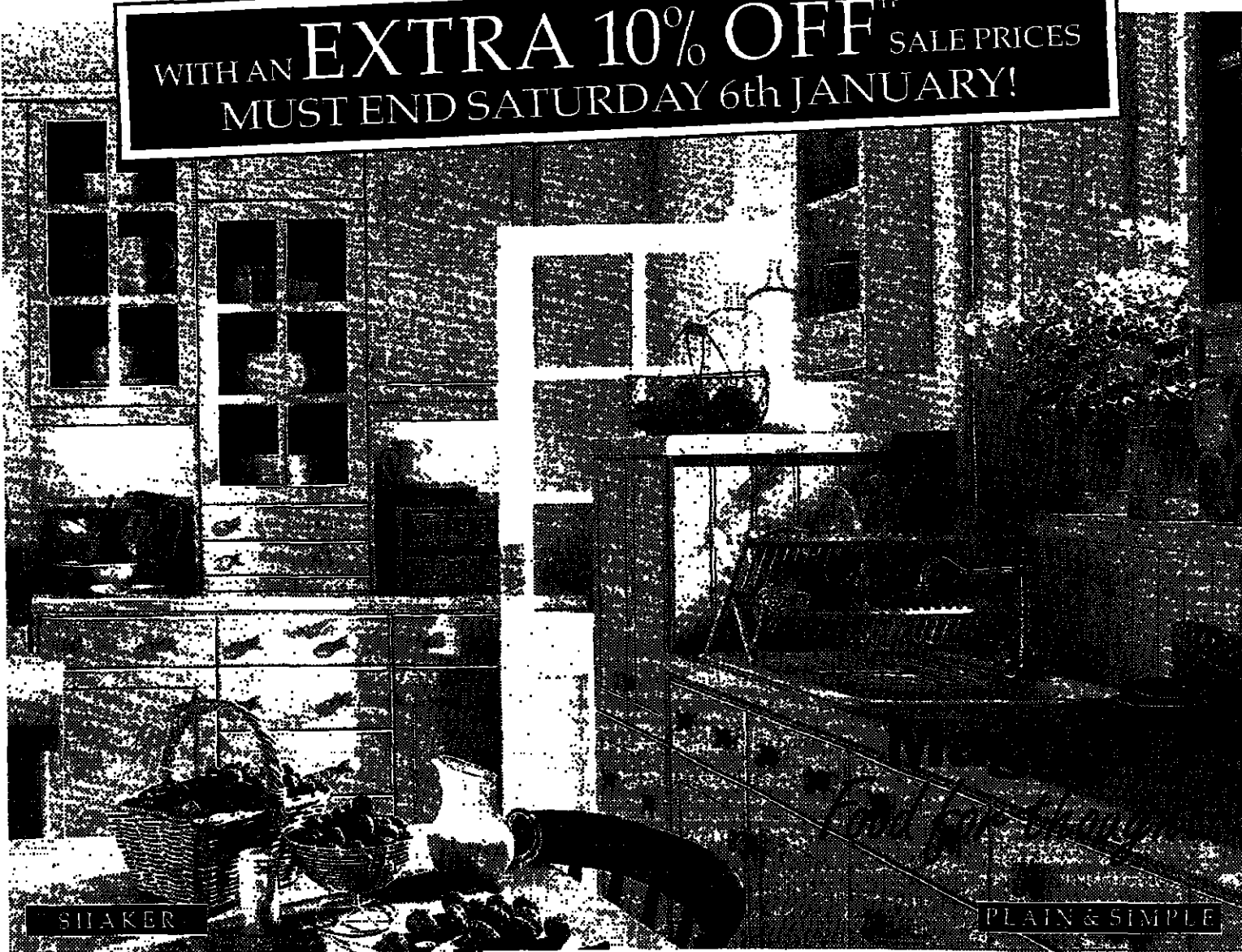
and Telecommunications in association with Sprint, the US telecommunications company. The growth has been exponential. Between March and July the number of Internet users in China jumped from 3,000 to 40,000, while the number of computers with access rose from 400 to 6,000. Until then, access to the Internet had been largely confined to academics and university researchers linked to a system set up by Qinghua University in Peking.

For a country where news management is a well-defined art and foreign radio broadcasts are regularly jammed, the free flow of traffic down the information highway poses a daunting challenge. Just this week, President Jiang Zemin, on a visit to the *Liberation Army Daily*, held forth on his opinion of news values: "The most

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Muslims freed but squabbles keep Nato busy

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

Nato defused one source of tension in Bosnia yesterday by securing the release of 16 Muslims abducted by Serbs in Sarajevo, but fresh problems quickly arose in areas contested between the Muslims and Bosnian Croats.

Bosnian Serb authorities freed three Muslim men, all of whom bore marks of physical punishment, early in the day and several hours later released the remaining 13 from Kula jail, the main Bosnian Serb detention centre for prisoners of war.

In the southern city of Mostar, however, Bosnian Croat authorities announced they were imposing a tax on United Nations aid trucks travelling between Croat- and Muslim-controlled regions. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees instantly suspended all its convoys, saying such taxes were unacceptable.

Under the Dayton peace terms, signed last month, Muslims and Croats are united in a federation that occupies 51 per cent of Bosnia's territory, while the rest is in Serb hands. However, Bosnian Croat leaders in Mostar have tried to establish as close as possible a relationship with Croatia itself, a point underlined by the fact that the Bosnian Croat tax on UN trucks was denominated in kunas, Croatia's currency.

Relations between Muslims and Croats, never entirely free of tensions, got off to a bad start in 1996 after an 18-year-old Muslim youth was shot dead on New Year's Eve by Bosnian Croat policemen in Mostar.

The youth, Alan Musovic, was killed at a checkpoint when he tried to cross a line separating the Bosnian Croat zone of control from the Muslim zone.

Mostar has remained divided into two national sectors despite clauses in the Dayton agreement that provide for full freedom of movement for civilians. The city is under nominal European Union administration, but Sarajevo radio, which speaks for Bosnia's Muslim-led government, said the EU was "a silent and impotent witness of the terror and obstructive behaviour" of the Bosnian Croats.

More trouble broke out in Mostar on Wednesday night when Muslim youths stoned Croatian-registered cars on a ruined boulevard that marks a dividing line between the Croat and Muslim sectors. Leaders of the two communities, who fought a bitter war in 1993, have also failed to resolve differences over how to repair a dam above Mostar that was damaged by floods in late December.

The release of the Muslims in Sarajevo followed an appeal from the United States to President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia, who demonstrated his influence over the Bosnian Serbs by negotiating the Dayton settlement on their behalf. The Muslims were seized as they travelled through the rebel Serb district of Ilidza, whose residents are angry because the peace agreement stipulates that their area is to be turned over to Muslim-Croat control.

The first three Muslims to be freed said their captors had taunted them with remarks such as "Turks, it is too early for

you to walk around Ilidza". One Muslim had a bruised face and a swollen nose, the result of a police beating.

Several others, however, said they had been surprised at the good treatment they had received in the Bosnian Serb prison.

The abductions were an embarrassment to Nato as the Muslim-led government cited them as proof that the alliance's peace implementation force was incapable of protecting civilians. Nato suggested at first that the abductions were not its responsibility but that of civilian law-enforcement bodies. In the end, the Serbs handed over the captives to Nato troops from France.



Eyes front: Croatia's President Tudjman (left) on a visit to Sarajevo yesterday, inspects a guard of honour with President Izetbegovic of Bosnia

UN flounders over plan to rebuild Bosnia

DAVID USBORNE
New York

Concern is growing at the United Nations that, while the Nato-led military campaign to return peace to Bosnia may be moving forward, plans for civilian reconstruction are proving harder to get off the ground.

The UN is encountering difficulties executing one of the few tasks left to it in Bosnia by the Dayton peace accord: the creation of a 1,700-strong civilian police contingent to help rebuild the police forces of the Serb and Muslim communities.

More broadly, however, doubts are growing about the way the accord distributes civilian responsibilities to a series of

victim of a vindictive sidelining campaign by the United States, which has made no secret of its wish to see the UN involved as little as possible.

An official, who asked to remain anonymous, said bitterly of the American attitude: "If you decide that you are going to dismember the best civilian implementation organisation around and try to put another one in its place, you shouldn't be surprised when things go wrong."

The shortcomings on the civilian side were highlighted by this week's kidnapping crisis in Sarajevo, which ended yesterday. The main task of the UN police force (Crypol) will be to return local police operations to full order - through retraining and general hand-holding - to be able to deal with incidents of this kind, that are not meant to be the responsibility of Nato.

Officials in New York admit that they have so far made very little headway in recruiting the 1,700 police officers needed for the mission. "We are still very far from assembling the authorised number," a spokesman said yesterday. "It is not easy to recruit well-trained police officers willing to serve in Bosnia."

Even if the UN police get there, it is not clear where they could live or work from.

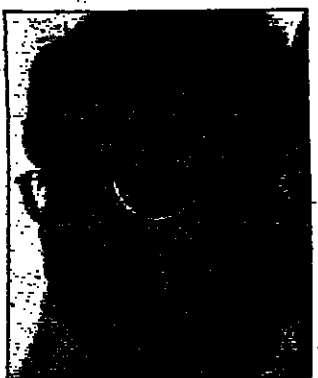
Another complaint emanating from the UN building here is that, as it sweeps through the country, the I-For mission of Nato is sucking up all available resources and accommodation. The UN has been forced to surrender almost all of its previous building space and may have to build pre-fabricated shelter for the police officers.

There has also been some frustration that, while the Nato forces were on the move over Christmas and the New Year, there was no mobilisation of Mr Bildt and his colleagues.

He arrived in Sarajevo on Wednesday, as did his OSCE counterpart, Robert Frowick. "There was a feeling that whole period was somehow squandered," one diplomat said.

The US spokesman at the UN, James Rubin, conceded that the outlook for the civilian operation in Bosnia looked unpromising. "There is an enormous amount of work to do, that's true, and all of the people involved are going to have to get rolling. And there are going to be some growing pains."

He contended, however, that it is normal for the military to establish a degree of security in a country before the civilian mission gets under way.



Bildt: Trying to co-ordinate a mixed bag of agencies

different international agencies at once, including the UN, the European Union and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), with Carl Bildt, the former Swedish prime minister, floating alongside them in an ill-defined co-ordinating role.

"The civilian structure is a patchwork of specialist agencies with no single person really to knock heads together and no apex of a chain of command," said Jim Shear, of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace in Washington. "Instead, there are several different chains of command."

Thus, the UN has been assigned the police mission as well as the relocation of refugees, to be undertaken by the UNHCR. Responsibility for human-rights protection will be shared by the UN and the OSCE, while the latter has been given the task of setting up elections later this year. The EU is to oversee the physical reconstruction of Bosnia.

Some in New York believe that the UN should have been selected to take the overall lead in the civilian effort in Bosnia but that it has been the

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international

Cyprus defies new efforts for peace

TONY BARBER
Europe Editor

Fresh efforts by the European Union and the United States to solve the Cyprus problem appear to be running into difficulty even before they have got properly under way.

Turkish officials expressed suspicion this week of an EU initiative for the island, divided between Greeks and Turks since 1974, while officials in Greece have sounded less than enthusiastic about a US diplomatic effort to be led by

Richard Holbrooke, the man who helped to broker last year's peace settlement in Bosnia.

Turkish troops invaded the island in July 1974 after Greek Cypriot supporters of union with Greece staged a coup with the support of Greece's then ruling military junta. The Turkish Cypriots declared a separate state in 1983.

Now the Europeans want progress on the Cyprus question because they have promised to open talks on full EU membership with the island's internationally recognised Greek

Cypriot government. These negotiations are due to start within six months of the end of the EU's inter-governmental conference on internal reforms, which will open in March and is expected to be wrapped up by the summer of 1997.

Given this time pressure, the Italian government, which holds the rotating EU presidency, is expected soon to announce the appointment of a political coordinator to spearhead the EU effort on Cyprus. A junior Italian foreign minister, Emanuele Scaramacca, is visiting Cyprus,

Greece and Turkey this week to prepare the way for the EU initiative.

Turkey and the Turkish Cypriots, whose self-proclaimed state in northern Cyprus is recognised by no government except that in Ankara, are unhappy that the EU is pressing ahead with moves to admit Cyprus before a political solution to the island's division has been reached.

A Turkish foreign ministry spokesman, Omer Akbel, said on Wednesday that there was no need for an independent EU

initiative on Cyprus, because the United Nations was already working on a diplomatic solution.

As for Mr Holbrooke, whose reputation as a problem-solver was enhanced by his efforts in Bosnia, he is supposed to visit Cyprus in late January for talks with the Greek and Turkish communities.

He vowed last month that 1996 would be "the year of the big push on Cyprus", but at the same time he has indicated that he wants to retire this year from his job as the US Assistant

Secretary of State for European and Canadian Affairs.

That raises the question of whether he will leave himself enough time to put together a solid set of proposals for ending a dispute that has defied all efforts at mediation for more than 20 years.

Greece's lukewarm response to Mr Holbrooke's mission reflects the belief that the US attaches such importance to its alliance with Turkey that it has tended to tolerate the Turkish military presence in northern Cyprus.



Richard Holbrooke: Did the trick in Bosnia

IN BRIEF

Lung operation for Papandreou

Athens — Doctors operated yesterday to remove fluid from Andreas Papandreou's lungs as the Greek Prime Minister's socialist party, Pasok, pondered a visit to ask for his resignation. A hospital statement described his condition as stable.

The conservative New Democracy party, meanwhile, said it would introduce a censure motion next week: the party has accused Pasok of "following obstructive tactics and putting off decisions" during Mr Papandreou's illness. AP

Death for cult rapist

Peking — The founder of the Beiliwang (Anointed King) doomsday cult has been sentenced to death for raping 19 women followers. Wu Yangming, 51, was sentenced on 29 December by the Beijing Intermediate People's Court, the Xinmin Evening News said. AP

Drunks freeze

Moscow — More than 300 people, most of them drunk, have died in Moscow from exposure to cold since the beginning of November. The number of victims has increased since the collapse of the Soviet Union because special services to collect drunks have been cut back. AP

Price on opium lord

Bangkok — The United States has offered a \$2m (£1.3m) reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of Burma's opium warlord Khun Sa, a US embassy official said yesterday. Reuters

Starvation warning

London — Large numbers of North Korean children will die of malnutrition in the next few weeks if rich countries do not provide more aid to the Communist country, a World Health Organisation report said. The country was hit by severe floods last summer. Reuters

Wings clipped

Jerusalem — A woman who wanted to be an Israeli fighter pilot has failed to make the grade, the army said. Alice Miller, 23, flunked a preliminary testing stage after winning a Supreme Court victory in November giving her the right to compete for a place in the men-only pilots' course. Reuters

Suspect surrounded

Sidon — The army ringed Lebanon's largest Palestinian refugee camp yesterday, demanding the surrender of Ahmed Abdul-Karim al-Saadi, suspected of masterminding the assassination of Sheikh Nizar al-Halaby, a prominent cleric, in Beirut last autumn. AP

12 die in clan clash

Mogadishu — At least 12 people were killed on Wednesday when clan fighters of the Ruhanweyn Resistance Army attacked the Somali faction leader Mohamed Farah Aided's forces in Baidoa, both sides said yesterday. Reuters

New Egyptian team

Cairo — A new Egyptian cabinet headed by Prime Minister Kamal Ganzouri was sworn in yesterday. There are six new ministers, including the country's first woman economy minister, Nawal el-Tatawi. The defence, foreign and interior ministries are unchanged. Reuters

Slave exhibition

Washington — An exhibit on slave life in the pre-Civil War South, pulled from the Library of Congress after black workers protested, has been invited to open at the Martin Luther King Memorial Library here. AP

Hostage talks

New Delhi — The British Home Secretary, Michael Howard, said he would discuss with Indian authorities efforts to win the freedom of four Western hostages in Kashmir but did not want to raise false hopes of their release. Reuters

'Paper of the future' runs out of time

MARY DEJEVSKY,
Paris

The French daily *Informatin*, conceived as a new sort of newspaper with appeal for the hard-pressed commuters of the television age, is to cease publication on Tuesday, one day short of its second anniversary. The final decision is to be taken at a board meeting today, but the director and majority shareholder, André Roussellet, is said to be intent on closure.

The small-format newspaper, with bright colour pictures and plentiful graphics, was a distinctive addition to the still largely black-and-white and pictureless French press. Neither up-market nor down-market, it aimed to give readers a succinct news review in an accessible form; its political stance was left of centre.

Although the newspaper had been making large losses, it had been expected to go into temporary receivership rather than close. Mr Roussellet, however, who rescued the paper soon after launch by taking the majority stake, was piqued earlier this week by the staff's refusal to accept a cut in holiday entitlement from eight weeks — the norm in the French press — to five. He was reported as saying: "I have always said that only one thing would make me give up: not having the support of my staff."

Staff yesterday insisted that they were not opposed to a rescue plan in principle "if the project is explained to us". But they conceded that the paper could not continue with the current losses — 60m francs (£8m) in 1995 — and a circulation down from 360,000 at launch to an estimated 60,000.

The closure of *Informatin* would mark the end of an idea that was hailed two years ago as the possible face of newspapers to come: smaller, leaner and cheaper. But many believe that the paper's problems derive less from its different format than from a wider crisis facing the newspaper industry.

The French press has experienced nothing like the economies of staff and costs seen in Britain over the past decade, and the price of newspapers (at Fr7 for a daily broadsheet despite government subsidies) remains high. Even the redoubtable *Le Monde*, one of few dailies to increase its circulation last year, had to cut staff for the second year running and increase its capital base in the face of sharply rising costs.

In the closing weeks of 1995 it became clear that not only *Informatin* but two other papers, the evening *France-Soir* and the left-of-centre *Liberation* were also in serious trouble. It is feared *Informatin* may not be the only title to close this year.

South Koreans press for a place at university



Learning curb: Young hopefuls try on the final day to file applications for a place at Seoul's Hanyang University. About 20,000 have attempted to get in, but with an acceptance rate of only one out of 5.7 applicants, many will be disappointed. Photograph: Choi Hang Young/Reuters

Dissident arrested by PLO vows to fight on

ERIC SILVER
Jerusalem

Bassem Eid, detained for 24 hours by PLO security men, is determined to go on exposing abuses of power by Yasser Arafat's Palestinian National Authority.

The Palestinian human rights researcher, who works for B'tselem, the Israeli human rights watchdog, was released on Wednesday night and was resting undisturbed yesterday in his east Jerusalem home.

Mr Eid will, however, be more careful about going out alone at night — and perhaps be less provocative in his choice of language to criticise wrongdoers.

Despite denials by Palestinian spokesmen, Mr Eid is convinced it was Force 17, Mr Arafat's elite security unit, that arrested him and took him off to Ramallah, 18 miles north of Jerusalem. *Al Quds*, the biggest-selling Palestinian daily paper, yesterday quoted senior officials confirming that Mr Eid was held for spreading dissension within Palestinian society.

He was finally set free after the intervention of Dr Ahmed Tibi, an Israeli Arab citizen who acts as a personal adviser to Mr Arafat. Dr Tibi apparently had no difficulty locating Mr Eid's captors.

Israeli and Palestinian observers were sceptical about suggestions that Mr Eid's arrest was a rogue operation. They condemned it as part of a pattern of intimidation which Mr Arafat has carried over from the liberation struggle to the threshold of an independent state.

It came 10 days after the detention of an *Al Quds* editor for relegating a story in praise of the PLO leader to an inside page, and three days after European monitors censured the official Palestinian radio and TV for discriminating against opposition candidates in the legislative council elections on 20 January, and the election commissioners for moving the goalposts.

Yizhar Be'er, B'tselem's executive director, said: "They arrested Bassem because he severely criticised the Palestinian authority during the last few months. They arrested him in order to stop him."

Dr Ali Jirbati, a political science professor at Bir-Zeit, the West Bank's oldest university, commented: "We are facing a National Authority that is trying to establish its authority in



Yasser Arafat: Criticised for abuses on home soil

the best way it knows, and this is the best way it knows. At the same time, it reveals to us a frightening fact, which is the extreme weakness of civil society here."

"All the institutions which should act as a buffer between the individual and the state — unions, voluntary organisations, the media — are extremely weak. They were effective during the Israeli occupation, but apparently when it comes to facing our own authority, things are different."

Dr Jirbati predicted a confrontation between the people and their leaders.

"Democracy won't be handed to the Palestinians by the National Authority without civil struggle," he said. "Society and the state's apparatus are going to face each other. Hopefully Palestinian society will be able

to assert itself, but I'm not sure of that."

A veteran Palestinian journalist, who asked not to be named, added: "It is part of a well established policy. While in Lebanon and Tunisia, Mr Arafat tried to get people down by sacking or isolating them. Now the name of the game is to arrest them. The only difference is that it is being done on Palestinian soil under a Palestinian flag. But Mr Arafat may find the West Bank and Gaza Palestinian a hard nut to crack. People are saying, 'If we weren't afraid of Israeli tanks, why should we be afraid of these Palestinian policemen?'"

What is surprising is that Mr Arafat is persisting with these tactics even though every move is being scrutinised by the international community. Human rights violations at this time can only undermine his claim to be a democratically-elected leader enjoying public support for making peace with Israel. ■ Israel will release 1,200 Palestinian prisoners next week, including 400 supporters of militant Islamic groups, Palestinian and Israeli officials announced, AP reports.

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A taint on Britain's honour

London has long been a haven for Arab dissidents. From today, though, all will live more fearfully, says Tim Llewellyn

"The British Government has given in to Saudi blackmail," says Abdel Bari al-Arwan, Palestinian editor of the London-based *al-Quds al-Arabi*, one of the few Arabic-language newspapers here – or for that matter anywhere – that is not owned, orchestrated or bribed by the Saudi Arabians. "Once you surrender to blackmail, where does it stop?"

The telephone in his Hamersmith office chirped incessantly yesterday with the voices of Arab dissidents, liberals and general opponents of the region's universally autocratic governments, worried that they are all now in danger in the country that has been a safe haven for so many years. Algerians, Bahrainis, Egyptians and Tunisians are at the top of the list of activists whom the British Government, arms-dealers and industrialists, in general, would like to see vanish from the London scene; their governments have put strong pressure on Britain to silence these largely pacific yet politically effective operators, who deal in words rather than bombs and bullets. In each case, these pressures have been sympathetically received. "Even tiny little Bahrain puts the wind up you," says the editor of *al-Quds*.

The haven of Arab opposition is north-west London – Willesden (the Saudis), Cricklewood (the Bahrainis), Harlesden (the Tunisians). Even Joseph Conrad's ineffective and seedy secret agent would have turned his nose up at the dedicated, somewhat bookish and unromantic existence of these exiles behind the mock-Tudor frontages. Information – newsletters, pamphlets, bulletins, newspaper articles, and in Mohammed al-Masari's case, cascades of faxes – is what these Arabs deal in.

In the paranoid world of Arab leaders, information is as feared a weapon as Semtex. Last week, Mr Masari and I talked in his ground-floor flat as the faxes buzzed towards towards the Gulf. I left loaded with his facts and figures and stories of Saudi incompetence, financial mismanagement,

debt, corruption and immorality – the basis of the material he transmits into the Kingdom.

Mr Masari is watched by British security, and there is little doubt that his phones, and faxes are monitored and translated by MI5. Mr Masari and others like him, however, are not worried by these watchers – rather the reverse. They have received little (until Michael Howard's expulsion order, that is) in the way of official or other British harassment: some advertising was refused; a telecommunications firm dropped its contract for no good reason; a London think-tank refused to write a report on security risks in the Gulf.

No, their main fears until now have been of reprisals against them by agents of their home governments. Ahmed Fahmi, of the Egyptian Action Group, which monitors human rights and political shenanigans back home – last month's charade of an election, for example – is concerned about reports of squads of Egyptian hit men here.

Mr Masari's expulsion, if it goes through, is probably more of a worry to him than threats of violence, just as it is to the Bahraini Freedom Movement. This group, more secular than Islamic, have so irritated the despotic little regime back home (which has locked up and deported thousands of Bahraini citizens merely for asking for the restoration of their constitution suspended 21 years ago), that Bahrain has hired MPs and PR firms to burnish its tarnished image and persecute its opponents.

The most controversial figure here, after Mr Masari, is probably Dr Rachid Gannouche, leader of the opposition Tunisian Nahda, or Renaissance Party. He was jailed by the late President Bourguiba, released, accused of involvement in a bomb outrage in a Tunisian resort, but cleared by the courts, and later fled to France and then on to Britain.

Britain has hundreds of millions of pounds invested in Tunisia and would be delighted to pay a first-class fare for Dr Gannouche on



No place of safety: London's Arabs will be more suspicious of each other, and of Britain

Photograph: Nicholas Turpin

Tunisian Airlines, or even back to the Sudan, whence he came. But he has been granted asylum here and concentrates on giving lectures on the role of Islam in the modern world. Dr Gannouche takes no chances. He does not give out his address or phone number, and meets journalists only rarely. When he does give interviews, it is usually in parks or hotel coffee shops.

The Tunisians are rightly nervous. Early last year they discovered that their rubbish was being collected by cars with Algerian diplomatic number plates – Tunisia has been a haven for Algerians on the run from their violently shaken homeland. They have

now, like many other Arab groups, invested in shredders. Bumping off irritants abroad is an old Arab custom. The Arabs here, mostly of Islamic tendencies, well recall the battleground London became in the late Seventies, when different Palestinian and Iraqi groups fought and killed each other in London's W1. British security became much tighter and more expert in its dealings with the fast-growing Arab community. The summary way the SAS dealt with the Iranian Embassy siege in 1980 incalculable a powerful respect among Middle Easterners for law-enforcement in this country.

The murder of a popular

Palestinian cartoonist, Naji el-Ali, in Chelsea in 1987, however (widely believed among Arab observers to have been ordered by Yasser Arafat) and the recent murder of a Libyan in Bayswater (which most Arabs still reckon has deep in it the hand of Colonel Gaddafi), remind activists of their vulnerability.

According to Azzam Sultan, a young Jordanian Islamist who runs a human rights group, "Liberty for the Muslim World", if this government can remove Mr Masari it can remove anyone. But worse, in my view, knowing the Arabs and the mentality of the region that most never quite shake off, is the now height-

ened fear that not only is Britain no longer a safe refuge, but that the authorities here might turn a blind eye to the activities of counter-opposition groups hired by Arab embassies.

Suspicion will grow among London's Arabs, about one another, about Britain's susceptibility to coercion, about Britain's "Muhabbarat" – MI5.

Beirut-on-Thames, as the Palestinian writer Said Abu-reesh likes to call London, has since Wednesday become Beirut-on-Edge.

The writer, a former BBC Middle East correspondent, writes and broadcasts on Arab affairs.

Mohammed al-Masari says his case proves the Home Office fell prey to outside influence

People differ in religion, background and culture but every sensible human being agrees with basic values. These values separate us from baser animals, and are generally accommodated under what is called human rights.

Britain has always been in the forefront of protecting such rights, has usually been the most difficult country to influence and has preserved the basic laws that protect the individual. In the US, the Far East and elsewhere in Europe we have seen signs of governments bending to outside interference, but not until this week has such a thing been seen here.

Furthermore the Home Office has admitted that the decision to deport me was the result of a fine balancing act. It is unfortunate that the scales were tipped by political interference, which in common law would have been called fraud or corruption. The scales of justice over the High Court could never have been tipped the way the Government's scales were.

Our lawyers were shocked to see the first clear-cut evidence of a Home Office decision based on political leverage. They always believed all such decisions were totally independent and reached with no one but the individual concerned in mind. But the letter received from the Home Office suggests my case has not been dealt with in this way. A lot of brain power and hours must have gone into coming up with such a very shameful recommendation. The Home Office spokesman admitted that it was the first time that this particular section and paragraph had been used. When answering our lawyers' questions, the official sounded very complacent and considered this a *fait accompli* with no real hope of appeal. Surely it would have been much more sensible if all this time and effort had been put to use in finding a way to persuade the regime in Saudi Arabia to improve its human rights record.

To what extent are democratic countries like Britain prepared to sacrifice their principles? Any such sacrifice will end in a cascade of denial of rights for all. The only guarantee of the long-term interests of us all is general respect for those principles. Britain could never have been in the centre stage of the world for such a long time if she had been a totalitarian state. Is

the British tradition of giving a home to freedom fighters to be dashed against the rocks? Freedom of speech used to be among the most valued of all traditions and rights but this has now evaporated – and is no doubt the first of many evaporations. The British government's anxiety over the need to defend so-called interests in Saudi Arabia must be challenged. These interests are the interests of a few businessmen who stand to make a few millions fast. This can only be achieved by dealing with a dictator whose human rights records and corruption have been attacked by Amnesty.

The proper interests Britain should be defending in Saudi



Is Britain's tradition of aiding freedom fighters to be dashed?

Arabia are a stable, elected, accountable leadership providing broad benefits to all members of the community through involvement in a long-term infrastructure development and country planning, rather than white elephant projects.

On the one hand the Saudi government has been constantly campaigning and stepping up the pressure to have me deported. They have done this by lobbying, phoning and writing to everyone they could think of. The amazing thing is that all the while they have called me and my colleagues "non-entities". Why then are they moving heaven and hell to remove me to Dominica?

The writer is leader of the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights.

Woman's secret desire: to wash whiter

Long nights, cruel days and the beginning of a new year bring in their train sober reflections. Have we come a long way, baby, or are we still smoking Virginia Slims? Have all our struggles resulted in just that, an advertising slogan? Is woman's most important function basically, really, fundamentally, shopping?

An account manager from a public relations firm has sent me the synopsis of a "major new study on European women" commissioned by the Whirlpool Foundation. A "whirlpool foundation" suggests the old whirlpool stitched bras that gave a woman a pair of rump horns in place of breasts. But no, white goods are not Manchester – as we used to call linen – but the consumer durables in which we wash our dirty linen, and the Whirlpool Foundation is "the philanthropic arm of the Whirlpool Corporation, manufacturer of white goods". What these noble people required of me is that I read their synopsis of their major study, request a copy of the full study, study it with awe, and then join them for their press conference to help them to promote their study, as part of their campaign "to improve the quality of life in countries throughout the world where Whirlpool products are distributed".

Women are still dumb enough to fall for this kind of thing. British women organised bring-and-buy sales

to finance the carrying of the message that HRT was the elixir of life into every hamlet in the country, raising money the hardest of hard ways just so they could spread the gospel according to the richest organisations in the world, the pharmaceutical multinationals, earning them billions and saving them billions at the same time. Attagirls!

So you can't be surprised that Ketchum Public Relations thought that I was going eagerly to devour the Whirlpool synopsis, beg for their full report, devote a day or two to deciphering it, and pay my own way to London to help them to make a good impression at their press conference without so much as a lunch for my pains.

The bland impudence of their expectations is of a piece with the lameness of their understanding of the issues that affect women. "Are you surprised", they ask me wide-eyed, and as incomprehensible as they are uncomprehending, "at the findings that British regard for the family matches that in the more traditional countries of Europe such as Italy and Spain?"

I am not even surprised that the British regard countries "such as Italy and Spain" as "more traditional", ie backward. The women of these countries may disoblige Whirlpool by using fewer white goods, not having got to



GERMAINE GREER

the stage of machine-washing their practically clean linen so often and with such powerful digesters that a sheet lasts months instead of years, but in other respects a more perceptive British regard might produce the conclusion that priest-ridden, class-ridden, gossip, empty-headed, politically illiterate Britain is now the most "traditional" country in Europe.

Take for example the New Year's Honours lists. The most valuable people in this country are male civil servants and captains of industry, it would appear. The most distinguished get to join court enclaves, the Order of the Bath, forsooth! The damp royal towel has been draped over the arm of a woman, the first female to appear on the honours list after 99 men, Stella Rimington, Dame Commander of the Order of the Bath. Then 17 more men before we get to "Miss" Eugenie Christine Turton, Grade 2, Cabinet Office (OPS). Then come the royal servants, chefs, gardeners, ladies-in-

waiting, and variously decorated dog-bodies. As in life, industry, academe and employment generally, women only begin to proliferate at the lower levels of the honours list, for services to the community, the sick, the disabled, the homeless, the mentally handicapped, yoo! the pony-club, the school crossing patrol, and often voluntary, ie unpaid, service at that. Only when it comes to self-sacrifice and caring for others do women approach parity with men.

For some time I have been studying obituaries, not just because so many of my friends are dying, but to see who gets remembered, by whom and for what. Most days it seems that only men are afflicted with mortality and no women have died at all. Simone Genevois, who died on 16 December, got a big obituary for making a film in 1927. The obituary followed her career until 1935 and found nothing whatever to say about what the illustrious dead had done with the intervening decades. Evangeline Bruce got an even bigger obituary by three hands for being "intelligent, beautiful, mysterious, ethereal", "charmingly seductive", "one of the best-dressed women in the world" who had "to reject scores of would-be lovers". "Dior created a special range of maternity clothes for her". Needless to say the picture that accompanied the text showed her young, slim,

jewelled, coiffed and 40 years younger than she was when she died.

In the obituaries of women, marriages are discussed in detail, not noted as an afterthought, as is usually done with distinguished men, who are allowed to grow old and whiskery in the accompanying photographs. The subliminal message is strong: we still value women for youth and beauty: more than half of their lives might just as well not be lived.

The promoters of the Whirlpool study think we will be surprised to learn that "women are now the carers and providers in today's society". Who do they think we are? Do they think we don't know we are now doing all the work? A report that studies women as if they were an interesting evolving minority has still not grasped the fact that women are the majority, trapped in the old rhetoric that treats women as objects rather than subjects.

It is curious to read that "96 per cent of women ... still say that 'family is the most important part of their lives' when the largest proportion of British households consists of just one person. It seems likely that the population sampled by MORI for Whirlpool was constructed like the women in the obituaries, "reproductive age, married, husband present", alias chief consumers of Whirlpool products. How many of the Knights Bachelor wash their own smalls, do you reckon?

ANOTHER VIEW Tony Burden

Police protection takes on a new meaning

There is great concern over serious injuries inflicted on police officers and members of the public in attacks which increasingly involve knives and other weapons. In 1995 police officers were surveyed on the general arming of the police. The result showed a very responsible attitude, with the majority resisting general arming, but highlighted the need for proper protective clothing and defensive equipment.

The service is now looking at both equipment and techniques to combat violence. The Home Secretary has been very supportive.

A lot of work is being done in producing body armour that protects against both guns and knives. Most

chief constables have also chosen one of the new-style batons available. These have successfully reduced the overall number of assaults on police officers but the severity of the attacks has risen. This has been tragically highlighted in the West Midlands this week where a number of officers have been seriously wounded.

This is why we badly need a further non-lethal option to deal with violence. There are many different devices available, but many are wholly unsuitable for use here. CS gas spray, however, is an effective incapacitant in keeping with our ethos of policing. For this reason it has been chosen for trials.

CS spray keeps a greater distance

between the police officers and their attackers and may be used effectively at a distance of 5 metres. It is a jet stream that is fired directly into the face of the attacker, causing severe distress and discomfort and some disorientation for a matter of minutes. This allows the person to be disarmed and restrained without endangering the police officer involved. Obviously this is essential if the police and members of the public are to be safeguarded against such attacks.

In 1995 the Home Secretary gave approval for such trials, but delays occurred because of concerns over health issues. A careful approach is necessary if the police are to continue

to have the high level of public support and confidence that they currently hold. In most forces there is one police officer for every 500 members of the public. This is an indication of the high level of support that we wish to retain. As with most chemical products there is a downside and if improperly used there may be health risks. However, this has to be balanced against the high level of violent threat that the police and public face. It is for this reason that many chief constables are seeking immediate reintroduction of CS incapacitants trials. A meeting of chief constables on 18 January will take a final decision.

Young police officers patrolling

the streets have to be properly protected and have a right to expect that that level of protection is provided. I am sure this expectation is backed by the majority of the public, who understand the dangers that officers face.

The service must ensure that such equipment is not misused. But perhaps it is time for the police and public to take a robust line in ensuring that officers receive the support they need. This is in the interest of the police and public alike.

The writer is Chief Constable of Gwent and chairs the Association of Chief Police Officers' sub-committee on self-defence and restraint.

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Blunt statement: 'The board, having lost confidence in its chief executive, has required his resignation with immediate effect'

Stock Exchange chief gets the sack

Outsider was under fire from the start

TOM STEVENSON
City Editor

The Stock Exchange stunned the City yesterday by sacking its chief executive, Michael Lawrence. He had lost the confidence of member firms and the board of directors, said the Exchange in an unusually powerful condemnation of its senior executive.

Mr Lawrence was informed of the board's decision at a meeting he attended briefly yesterday morning which appeared to have split the Stock Exchange's senior executives. John Kemp-Welch, the former senior partner at Cazenove and now chairman of the Exchange, said the decision had been clear cut but it was not unanimous and not all of the board was present at the meeting.

Mr Kemp-Welch said: "The board, having lost confidence in its chief executive, has required his resignation with immediate effect. While Mr Lawrence's departure reflects the loss of confidence in him, it does not imply any change in the Stock Exchange's policy."

He added that Mr Lawrence's sacking had not been prompted by any single event. "This erosion of confidence took place gradually. A

combination of incidents made his situation untenable."

Refusing to elaborate on the precise reasons for the sacking, Mr Kemp-Welch hinted at Mr Lawrence's perceived failings by saying that the search for a successor would be trying to find "an able businessman, someone able to formulate and drive through strategy and able to forge a relationship of confidence with the Exchange's members."

While the search for a successor continues, Mr Kemp-Welch will chair the Exchange's executive committee, supported by two deputy chairmen, Ian Plenderleith, a director of the Bank of England and a member of the Stock Exchange board, was yesterday promoted to that position, joining Ian Salter. Mr Kemp-Welch would not be drawn on whether Mr Lawrence had received any formal warnings. But he stressed that nothing improper or unethical had taken place. "There is no question of dishonesty at all."

Labour City spokesman Alastair Darling demanded a full explanation "to prevent lasting damage to the reputation of the City. The fact that Michael Lawrence has gone signals deeper problems at the Stock

Exchange than they are admitting. It is fairly well-known that he wanted to pursue radical changes within the Stock Exchange and that he was being resisted."

"He had only been at the Stock Exchange for a comparatively short period and his sudden departure clearly indicates something is going wrong."

The resignation of Mr Lawrence is a further embarrassment for the Exchange, coming just two years after his predecessor, Peter Rawlins, was also forced to quit following the expensive fiasco of Taurus, the computer system that failed to work. Mr Lawrence's appointment followed an exhaustive eight-month search.

It follows a turbulent year at the Exchange during which Mr Lawrence is widely seen to have antagonised a range of vested interests. His determination to press ahead with an order-driven alternative to London's existing quote driven share dealing system has put backs up at the City's powerful market making firms.

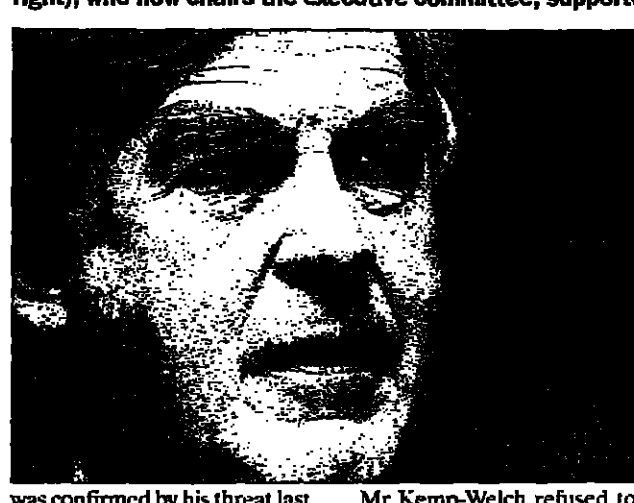
He has also upset company directors with his insistence on tightening up the terms of the Greenbury report on corporate governance. And he was roundly criticised for a leaked letter to the Treasury, effectively accusing the government of insider dealing during the sale of its remaining stakes in National Power and Powergen.

Investors saw the value of their electricity shares collapse the day after the sell-off of the generators' shares when the industry's official watchdog announced he was reviewing power prices. The City was aghast at his decision to publish a private letter to the Treasury, suspecting he was simply trying to endear himself to the Labour Party.

In the highly clubbable atmosphere of the City, his action was seen as a betrayal, an unnecessary washing of dirty linen in public. The feeling that Mr Lawrence was not "one of us"



Michael Lawrence (above) was said to have lost the confidence of the board, led by chairman John Kemp-Welch (below right), who now chairs the executive committee, supported by Ian Plenderleith (below left) as a deputy chairman



was confirmed by his threat last year to sue an exchange member, Sharelink, over its plans to provide an Internet share dealing system. He later caused the Exchange further embarrassment by climbing down.

Mr Kemp-Welch refused to be drawn on exactly what the board meant by the alleged loss of confidence, nor when the doubts emerged.

Mr Lawrence received a controversial bonus of £100,000 a

year ago as a reflection of his achievements during his first year in office. He enjoys a one-year rolling contract of employment with the Exchange and in the year to March took home £423,000 including the

bonus payment and an £80,000 contribution to his pension. Mr Lawrence, 52, celebrated his appointment to the top job by buying actor Rowan Atkinson's red Aston Martin.

Comment, page 17

Board of the London Stock Exchange

Chairman	Non-executive directors
John Kemp-Welch	Gary J Allen
	Graham Allen
	Richard A Barfield
	John Bond
	Donald H Brydon
	Stephen Cooke
	Masashi Kaneko
	Michael Marks
	Robert Metzler
	Ian Plenderleith
	Mark Radcliffe
	Ian Salter
	Nigel Sherlock
	Bernard Solomons
	Nicholas Verrey
	deputy chairman

As at 16.10.95

Granada may wager BSkyB stake

JOHN SHEPHERD
and MATTHEW HORSMAN

Investors are becoming increasingly convinced that Granada will use much of its £700m shareholding in BSkyB, the satellite television company, to deliver a knock-out blow to win control of the Forté hotels and restaurants company.

Speculation also grew yesterday that, to see off Granada, Sir Rocco Forte would be prepared to split his role as chairman and chief executive, and even distance himself from the day-to-day running of the group by becoming non-executive chairman.

Sources said that some of

Forté's main institutional shareholders, which include Mercury Asset Management with 13.23 per cent and Robert Fleming, the 10th-biggest with 1.78 per cent, were prepared to back Forté if Sir Rocco took those steps.

Meanwhile, dealing rooms in leading City stock brokers firms were awash yesterday with gossip that Granada was looking to place with institutional investors the 111 million BSkyB shares it owns directly.

Some dealers said there were separate rumours that Granada may even be prepared to distribute the BSkyB shares to Forté's shareholders. BSkyB shares closed 2p higher at 420p,

just 1p below the all-time high. There are 975 million Forté shares in issue. An exchange of one BSkyB share for every nine of Forté's would add 46p a share to the value of the bid terms.

A Granada insider said: "Certainly it was one of the options we have considered. But it would be unattractive to lose the advantages of the stake, and we don't really want to dismember it."

One leading analyst, who preferred not to be named, said: "I would have thought he would be crazy to consider it [a sale]. Gerry is chairman of BSkyB and the sale would make him look bad. Investors would

lose confidence and he would have to resign as chairman of BSkyB if he sold the shares."

However, City sources said that several of Granada's institutional shareholders were becoming reluctant to underwrite a higher offer and would prefer the company to drop its bid and trump Whitbread's £1.05bn pitch for Forté's roadside restaurants - the Happy Eater, Little Chef and Welcome Break chains.

Granada is separately facing increasing pressure from the powerful Council of Forté, which owns less than 1 per cent of Forté's shares but controls 50 per cent of the votes. The council, according to

sources, has thrown a time-bomb into the battle by taking an active role in the bid and demanding that Granada offer at least £300m for its shares.

Asked to clarify whether the Council had demanded a hefty premium for its shares, a Granada spokesman said: "At least it shows they are willing to talk to us."

He dismissed suggestions the council could be holding out for as much as £300m. "That is just a negotiating position."

City sources said stock market rumours circulating yesterday that Granada would today increase its bid were wide of the mark, adding that the company would not move until Monday at the earliest. Any higher offer has to be made before Wednesday.

Forté again lashed out yesterday at Granada's contention that it could enhance Forté's profitability by £100m annually if its bid succeeds.

The company's advisers challenged suggestions, revealed yesterday in the Independent, that significant savings could be achieved by reductions in head-office charges and through combining the Forté and Granada roadside restaurants businesses and hotels.

"Why doesn't Granada understand that the buying synergies between restaurants and hotels are minor compared with the profit potential of good yield management?"

It emerged last night that Granada's £100m target is based on a lower profit than the £190m full-year forecast announced by Forté last week.

Retail stake sold by Green

BY NIGEL COPE

Philip Green, former chairman of the What Everyone Wants retail chain, has sold his stake in Owen & Robinson, the troubled retailer which was placed in administration last year.

Mr Green has sold both his 16 per cent equity stake and the £6m of bank debt he acquired last year to a consortium led by Maurice Dwek, Owen & Robinson's chairman.

Mr Dwek now plans to refloat the company on the stock market and concentrate on its Foothold chain of 58 sports shoe shops which are profitable. In what the company is claiming is a fresh start, it has also renegotiated the high rents on certain stores which have placed so much pressure on the group.

Rodney East and Keith Miles, former managing director and finance director of Etam, the fashion chain, are also joining the Owen & Robinson board as non-executives.

Shares in Owen & Robinson were suspended at 16p last July when it said the closure of its jewellery business was costing more than expected.

Mr Green took effective control of the company when he acquired the bank debt from the TSB. Since then he has acquired the Olympus Sports chain from Sears in a deal with Tom Hunter, Scottish sports retailer. He also controls the Owen Owen department store chain.



Professor Patrick Minford (left) and Kenneth Clarke

Minford tells how Clarke has got it wrong

DIANE COYLE
Economics Correspondent

Patrick Minford, one of the Treasury's six high-profile economic advisers, yesterday accused Chancellor Kenneth Clarke of failing to understand the economy.

He said that Mr Clarke's misguided policies were jeopardising the Conservative Government's re-election chances. "Either Mr Clarke does not care about the economy or he is unable to figure it out. I presume it's the latter," Professor Minford said.

The Liverpool University professor and member of the Treasury's panel of independent forecasters said the November Budget would damage the economy. Professor Minford, a well-known right-wing economist, believes Britain is in a dangerously feeble state.

"The policy is wrong, the evidence shows it is wrong and the Chancellor has failed to override his officials," he said yesterday. "Put crudely, if the Government wants to win the general election, the Chancellor has to ignore the Treasury."

A Treasury spokesman said that Professor Minford was well-known for his forthright views. "The Chancellor is looking forward to receiving advice from the Panel when it meets at the end of the month. He expects a lively and frank discussion," the spokesman said.

In his analysis of the Budget, published last month, Professor Minford described it as "a disaster for free-market policies". He argued that the Treasury and Bank of England had ensnared the Chancellor in a policy of killing inflation at any cost at a

time when it was unnecessary - improving Labour's chances. Yesterday he added: "It is not as if this policy has been widely successful. There is a serious slowdown six months before a possible election. Inflation has been beaten already, he said."

Professor Minford's advice to Mr Clarke is that he should hold a fundamental strategic review of economic policy, drawing on advice from experts independent from the Treasury.

"To be fair to him, not many Chancellors have enough grasp of economics to override their officials. But, at least, others have gone to enormous lengths to check what those officials say with outside experts."

The Panel of Independent Forecasters, of which he is one of the initial members, was no substitute. Members of the Panel are chosen for a wide range of views. "You can't take their reports and knit one, pearl one," he said.

Professor Minford's passionately held free-market views found much greater favour with the government under Mrs Thatcher's rule. He is a firm believer in the success of the Conservative Government's assault on inflexibility in the labour market. He argues, as a result, that unemployment is far higher than it needs to be to keep inflation under control. "Policy is far too tight. A zero target for the public sector borrowing requirement is too tight and interest rates are too high." In his last report for the Treasury Panel, he called for tax cuts of £18bn over three years and a full percentage point drop in interest rates. Mr Clarke has delivered £3bn in tax cuts and a quarter point base rate cut.

Hotel giants jockey for Savoy takeover

Three of the world's biggest hotel chains are jockeying for position to mount a takeover bid for the Savoy group, valued at almost £400m on the stock market, regardless of the outcome of Granada's titanic bid battle for Forté, writes John Shepherd.

The three companies, all American, are ITT Sheraton, Hilton Hotels Corporation and Marriott. It is understood that approaches have been made to Granada, which stands to inherit a 68 per cent holding but limited voting stake in the Savoy if it gains control of Forté.

Moreover, it is also understood that the Savoy executive committee, comprising main board directors and formed when Granada launched its

bid, have discussed possible takeover offers at recent meetings.

However, the proposals include diluting the holdings of the Wontner family trusts, which have voting control through their 'B' shares. Sources said the proposals had been received coldly by Wontner family members.

Hotel industry sources added that a "bullish" profit forecast is about to be made by the Savoy group which, besides owning the famous hotel of the same name in the Strand in London, encompasses the Berkeley, Claridge's, the Connaught, and the Lancaster hotels.

The profit forecast will be for the financial year that has just finished, calendar 1995, and

will be released when Granada, as is expected, increases its offer for Forté. Annual results are normally announced by the Savoy in April. The Savoy declined to comment.

Forté has still not ruled out considering an offer for its entire shareholding in the Savoy despite this week's promise to distribute the shares to its own investors if it remains independent.

Sources close to the company said "tentative" approaches had been made about the stake, but no "concrete" proposals had been made before the share distribution plan was announced on Tuesday.

Forté yesterday left the door open to possible buyers for its Savoy shares. Richard Power,

director of public affairs and in line for a full boardroom post, said: "If somebody makes us an offer that is better value to shareholders than the distribution then we would have to consider it."

Hotel analysts said yesterday that talk of a takeover strike for the Savoy were gathering momentum. Any buyer of the Forté stake would have to mount a full bid under Rule 9 of the Takeover Code.

The Savoy group, despite benefiting from the tourist boom in London this year, misses out on the big gains that would arise from being part of an international group - particularly marketing. Large international chains are making big gains in market share.

STOCK MARKETS					
Index	Close	Day's change	Change (%)	1995/96 High	1995/96 Low
FTSE 100	3714.10	-1.50	-0.0	3715.80	2954.20
FTSE 250	4071.40	+17.50	+0.4	4071.40	2967.30
FTSE 350	1845.20	+1.20	+0.1	1845.20	1482.40
FT Small Cap	1966.40	+8.23	+0.4	1963.11	1678.61
FT All Share	1817.55	+1.59	+0.1	1837.78	1489.23
New York	5189.01	-3.06	-0.1	5207.44	3632.06
Tokyo	20618.00	+749.85	+3.6	20618.00	14485.41
Hong Kong	10573.90	+178.46	+1.7	10573.90	6967.93
Frankfurt	2324.32	-4.90	-0.2	2329.22	1910.96

Source: FT Information

INTEREST RATES									
Short sterling*			UK medium gilt			US long bond			
* US\$ Index interest contract			* Treasury 10 Year						
Money Market Rates			Bond Yields %						
Index	1 Month	1 Year	Medium Bond (%)	Year Age	Long Bond	(30) Year Age			
UK	6.47	6.38	7.42	8.73	7.58	8.69			
US	5.69	5.44	5.55	7.87	5.94	7.88			
Japan	0.38	0.75	3.04	4.72	-	-			
Germany	3.81	3.63	5.95	7.78	8.72	-			
* Bankers' indices									
MAIN PRICE CHANGES									
Rises	Price (p)	Change (p)	Change (%)	Falls	Price (p)	Change (p)	% Change		
Anglo Group	40.5	2.5	6.6	House of Fraser	172	9	5.0		
Man (E & F)	151	9	6.3	Color Group	244	12	4.7		
British Steel	168.3	6.8	4.2	Rugby Group	109	4	3.5		

*All Bank Rates quoted

CURRENCIES

The figure contains three line graphs showing currency index trends from February to April. The first graph, £/\$, shows an index starting at 1.52, rising to 1.54 by March, and then fluctuating between 1.54 and 1.55. The second graph, £/DM, shows an index starting at 2.17, rising to 2.25 by March, and then fluctuating between 2.25 and 2.28. The third graph, £/¥, shows an index starting at 100, rising to 102 by March, and then fluctuating between 102 and 104.

Month	Index
Feb	1.52
Mar	1.54
Apr	1.55

Month	Index
Feb	2.17
Mar	2.25
Apr	2.28

Month	Index
Feb	100
Mar	102
Apr	104

Notes: Last exchange rates and US Fed Reserve rate of 1200 hours

Pound

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
\$ (London)	1.5491	-0.20	1.5634
\$ (N York)	1.5450	-0.05	1.5630
DM (London)	2.2562	+2.22	2.4798
¥ (London)	164.354	+12.478	137.81
£ Index	84.0	+0.6	88.7

Dollar

	Yesterday	Change	Year Ago
£ (London)	0.6455	+0.08	0.639
£ (N York)	0.6472	+0.35	0.639
DM (London)	1.4565	+1.92	1.5335
¥ (London)	106.102	+1.735	101.01
£ Index	95.1	+0.8	96.6

OTHER INDICATORS

	Yesterday	Day's chg	Year Ago	Index	Latest Tr. Avg	Next Pkg.
Oil Brent \$	18.47	-0.16	16.45	RPI	149.8 3 1pc	2.8 18 Jan
Gold \$	393.75	-0.15	374.5	GDP	106.5 2 1pc	4.3 22 Jan
Gold £	254.08	+2.16	240.10	Base Rates	— 6 50pc	5.25 —

How Bank exchange rates and US Dollar Index at 1200 hours

*All Bank Rates quoted

24p 11.50

Big mistakes that upset all sides at the Exchange

COMMENT

'Mr Lawrence seems to have made it doubly worse through words and actions that at best looked out of place and at worst heaped ridicule both on his organisation and his office'

Michael Lawrence never was a popular man at the Stock Exchange. Almost from the day he joined two years ago, he began to upset people. He was an outsider in a hurry, determined to revolutionise an ancient institution, slay sacred cows, and find a new role for the Exchange in a fast-changing world. If toes needed to be trodden on, so be it. As if that were not bad enough for the City old guard, an abrasive and aggressive style compounded the impression among traditionalists of a charmless, jumped-up little meddler.

It wasn't just that he didn't fit, however. The Stock Exchange is a broad church. By the end he had managed to alienate virtually all its constituents in one way or another. The politician's art, it is often said, is to be all things to all men. Mr Lawrence's penchant was the very antithesis; he managed to act against one faction after another, crucially, right at the end, against the big battalions of the Stock Exchange, the all-powerful market making firms.

With so many commercial interests jostling for position, the chief executive's post may perhaps always have been an impossible one.

But Mr Lawrence seems to have made it doubly worse through words and actions that at best looked out of place and at worst heaped ridicule both on his organisation and his office. His position cannot have been helped by a board which while publicly supporting his actions, whispered cruelly behind

his back about what a disastrous appointment he was. John Kemp-Welch, a brilliant senior partner while at Cazenove, proved spineless as Stock Exchange chairman, failing to grip the situation before it got out of hand. By the end, all he could do was protest vainly in the face of overwhelming pressure from his members for Mr Lawrence to go.

Mr Lawrence's first big mistake, apart from that, is, from failing to turn up to the Stock Exchange annual meeting and a similar no-show at Sir Andrew Hugh Smith's leaving do, was to incense brokers firms that rely heavily on private client business. All that he did seemed designed to back the interests of big institutional shareholders against those of the private investor.

Then he upset the increasingly powerful foreign newcomers to London. Rudi Mueller, chairman of UBS, resigned from the board saying first privately then publicly, that he had lost all faith in the Stock Exchange and what it was trying to do. Mr Lawrence's failure to grasp the opportunity of forming a federal structure with other European bourses, preferring instead in true Brit style to believe that the Exchange could continue to dominate European equity trading on its own, was perhaps one of his biggest failings.

As the farce gathered pace, Mr Lawrence chose first to deprive another Stock Exchange exile, David Jones of Sharelink, of a price feed, then when Mr Jones accused him of behaving like a monopolist, he

ridiculously threatened to sue for defamation. Finally he caved in and gave Sharelink all it asked for. Oh, and then there was the Bank of England, which Mr Lawrence managed to fall out with over Crest, the automated settlement system. All this he might just about have survived but then he did something really stupid. In his search for a populist cause, he decided to take on the market-makers.

There were two prongs to this admirable but fool-hardy course of action. The first was to suggest that as a way of plugging the revenue gap that would be left by the demise of the Talisman settlement system, the Stock Exchange should go into competition with its own members on services such as inter dealer broking.

Now there have always been two approaches to management, both of them with merit: to consult or not to consult. By choosing the latter route in an organisation which is still more akin to a club than a company, Mr Lawrence buried all hope of survival.

The second leg of the attack on the big league firms was then unveiled – the rapid introduction of an order-driven trading system alongside the present quote-driven one. Mr Lawrence was in effect reading his own last rites.

Ironically, that plan, so damaging to the profits of entrenched market-makers, looks as if it will survive, for at this late stage of the game, the Exchange may have no option

but to bolt on this more competitive way of trading. Whether the Stock Exchange can carry on in its present form, with all its warring factions, is another matter.

Dollar's blistering pace likely to falter

The dollar has got off to a cracking start in the new year, rising to almost a two-year high against the yen. But there are good grounds to be sceptical about a continuing robust performance throughout 1996 against both the yen and the mark.

Start with the budget deal – if and when it is finally reached. This might give the dollar a further fillip, but the forex markets have long factored an eventual agreement to balance the budget by 2002 into their calculations. In any case, the deal is Augustinian in its approach – make me chaste, but not yet – with the tax cuts front-loaded and the spending reductions back-loaded. If a week is a long time in politics, seven years is the lifetime of a Methuselah in the trigger-happy foreign exchange markets.

The current orthodoxy is that fiscal rectitude and currency strength march hand in hand. This overlooks the fact that the budget deficit is already less as a percentage of GDP in the US than it is in Germany and Japan. The move from a federal deficit of about 2 per cent to balance over seven years is hardly the stuff of seismic changes on the

foreign exchanges. The nub of the problem for the dollar is that, for all their riches, Americans save too little; foreigners have had to make up the balance. This has made the US the biggest net debtor country in the world, a dubious achievement all the more striking in that the title has been acquired in just 15 years.

In its December forecast, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development saw little sign of a fundamental improvement in the US trade position. The annual current account deficit was projected to stay at a whopping \$150bn – about 2 per cent of GDP – for the next two years.

Without a sustained move into surplus on the current account, last recorded in 1981, it is hard to see how the present upswing in the dollar can be anything other than a cyclical rally. As long as the Bank of Japan continues to prime the world monetary pump, the dollar looks set for further gains against the yen. Even here it is worth noting that a recovery to much above ¥110 would risk upsetting the trade apperance with the US by giving new impetus to Japanese exports.

Against the mark, the dollar will have to battle against more formidable headwinds. Few would deny that the German mark and the flotilla of linked European currencies are over-valued against the dollar. But as long as uncertainty persists about the fate of EMU, it is difficult to see the mark losing its status as the preferred refuge for investors betting against the Maastricht deadline.

Fleming inquiry looks at link with PR firm

DAVID HELLIER

Three employees at Robert Fleming, the investment bank, have been absent from the office while the firm's compliance department investigates allegations of possible improper use of inside information.

The inquiry focuses on the relationship between the three employees, the financial public relations firm, Financial Dynamics and the alleged leaking of information about the financial results of Caradon, the building products group.

The Robert Fleming probe will be a major blow to Financial Dynamics, whose chairman Tony Knox was last month rebuked by the Takeover Panel for releasing price-sensitive information to a building analyst about possible 1996 profits for Amec, the UK construction group. Last night Mr Knox declined to make any on the record comment about the Caradon affair.

Financial Dynamics, which is

one of the City's largest public relations companies, was sacked by Amec – then at the centre of a £360m hostile takeover bid – after being found to have "failed to take sufficient care" in divulging information to analysts.

Robert Fleming would make no comment yesterday about its investigation but it is believed that the three employees have not returned to work since the Christmas break while the firm conducts its highly sensitive inquiries. A source at the firm said yesterday: "It would be wrong to say they have been suspended but we are looking into the matter. If anything untoward has happened, then it must be sorted out."

One of the three is expected back at work today; another is expected to return on Monday.

The stock exchange launched an inquiry into share dealings in Caradon, a Financial Dynamics client, in October after the building products group was forced to bring forward its results and issued a profits warn-

ing. On the Friday before its interim results were due to be published Caradon was the stock market's most heavily traded stock after late afternoon dealings saw 26 million shares change hands at around 210p each. The profits warning on the Monday led to a number of brokers' downgrades.

One building analyst said yesterday: "It looked very bad. There was a leak in the Sunday newspapers about problems at Caradon. Then the company issued an abridged version of its results on the Monday, three days ahead of schedule."

At the time dealers expressed concern over the trades that took place in Caradon on the Friday. They said the trading implied that some people were aware of Caradon's poor performance. Reports in two Sunday newspapers that the company's results would be disappointing added to their suspicions that there had been a leak. One source said that the stock exchange may have aban-

doned its inquiry towards the end of last year but resumed it again after tape recordings concerning the Amec affair were listened to by the Takeover Panel. The tape recordings appear to have highlighted a relationship between Financial Dynamics and a research analyst at Robert Fleming.

Robert Fleming is believed to have listened to further tape recordings and discovered a conversation between the same research analyst and Financial Dynamics about the Caradon results. It is now trying to assess whether any inside information was indeed passed on by the public relations firm to that analyst and if so whether it was improperly used.

At the time of the Amec affair the director-general of the Takeover Panel, Bill Staple, was reported to have said that he hoped the ruling against Financial Dynamics would serve as a warning to the entire market that the regulator was determined to clean up the City.



John Cleese: founder of Video Arts

Photograph: FT

Video Arts sells out in £25m deal

NIGEL COPE

Video Arts, the management training company founded by the comic actor John Cleese, has been sold for around £25m to MediaKey, a media group that has announced plans for a stock market listing.

It is the second time Video Arts has been sold since Mr Cleese founded the company in 1972 with Sir Anthony Jay, the author of the *Yes, Minister* series.

After building a high profile business with videos such as *Meetings Bloody Meetings* and enlisting the assistance of other comedians and actors such as Dawn French and Robert Lindsay, Cleese sold the company to its management for £43m in 1989.

Since then the business has been hit by the recession which affected training budgets. However last year the company was still highly profitable and made profits of £3m on sales of £12m.

Mr Cleese no longer owns a stake in the company but has a

two year contract to produce training videos. Commenting on the sale, Video Arts managing director John Christmas said: "We think it is a marvellous opportunity to raise funds to invest in new formats and CD-Rom in particular."

MediaKey plans to raise around £20m from the float which will value the group at £30m. It intends to develop a portfolio of publishing businesses which can be distributed on CD-Rom and other new media.

In a second deal, also announced yesterday, MediaKey is also paying £6m for Marshall Information, a publishing company which specialises in reference books.

Richard Harman, former managing director of publishing group Dorling Kindersley, now runs MediaKey. He said the deals would enable MediaKey to enhance the back catalogues of both Video Arts and Marshall and begin to produce the library of titles on CD-Rom.

BA plans to retain USAir links

RUSSELL HOTTEN

British Airways said yesterday it had no plans to cut ties with USAir, the struggling airline in which it has a 25 per cent stake. Bob Ayling, who took over as BA's chief executive on Monday, said the relationship was improving all the time.

But there was no comment on whether BA would lift its investment in USAir. BA has until the end of January to decide whether to raise its stake, though there has been talk it may try to delay a decision.

The news came as BA reached a new peak of 48pp, up

18p, due to a profits upgrade from stockbrokers UBS, and positive comment from analysts at BZW.

Last year Seth Scofield, USAir's outgoing chairman, said the company was standing on its own two feet and did not need an injection of cash from BA.

Mr Ayling said: "We have no plans to sever links with USAir. We're working very well with them. The strength of that relationship improves all the time."

USAir talked last year to American Airlines and United Airlines about a possible alliance or merger but discussions

failed. However, BA is strongly rumoured to be holding separate talks with American Airlines about a code-sharing arrangement and other links.

Meanwhile, Virgin, Richard Branson's airline group, firmly yesterday denied speculation that it was close to forging a link with Airtours. Shares in Airtours rose on rumours the two companies plan joint holiday deals to the United States. Last year Virgin was tipped as close to a deal with Airtours' rival, First Choice. Virgin said yesterday that there was no truth in the suggestion. "Our package holidays growth is linked to the

growth in our airlines business," a spokesman said.

Also yesterday, new figures from the Association of European Airlines showed that European airlines carried 7.7 per cent more passengers in November compared with the same month in 1994.

Separately, it announced that Herbert Bannmer, head of Austrian Airlines, will be the AEA chairman for 1996. He succeeds Luxair president Roger Sietzen. Mr Bannmer said he would continue the AEA's drive to push national governments to end the fragmentation of Europe's airline industry.

BT investors' concerns grow

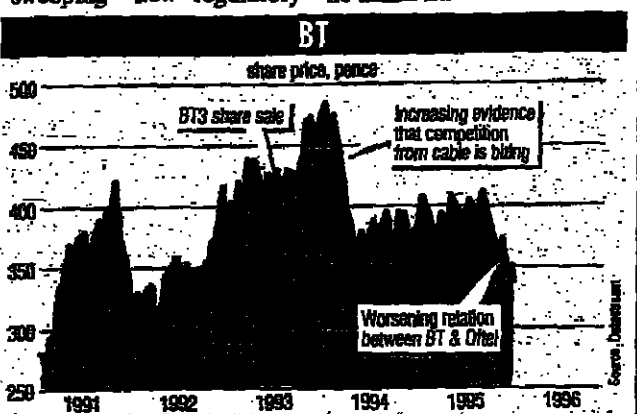
MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

Hundreds of small shareholders have written to the Government and BT complaining about the effect of tightening regulation on the company and the decline in the share price. A BT spokesman said many private investors feel that they were sold shares under false pretences and believe the company is suffering unnecessarily.

BT's share price has fallen to around £3.45 from more than £4.80 a few years ago. At the time of the sale of the third tranche of BT shares in July 1993 the share price was £4.10. Concern among investors is thought to have escalated following proposals late last year from the watchdog, Don Cruickshank, to take on "sweeping" new regulatory

powers. City analysts have warned that future pricing proposals from the regulator could prove extremely onerous for BT. The consensus is that relations between BT and Mr Cruickshank's office – OfTel – have become increasingly acrimonious and the company could soon find itself referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission if it refuses to accept Mr Cruickshank's demands.

In a letter last month to Michael Heseltine, Deputy Prime Minister, one investor said: "Don Cruickshank seems to be turning into a power-crazed megalomaniac seeking to promote his own media image." Some sources say that BT is actively encouraging investors to complain. OfTel said that Mr Cruickshank would continue to carry out his duty as he thinks fit.



Whenever you're ready to talk, we're ready to listen.

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If you find it hard to talk to those around you, perhaps you should consider talking to The Samaritans.

We won't push you to say more than you want to and we won't be offended if you hang up. Equally, we'll be happy for you to phone back later.

Our number's in the phone book, and every call is confidential.

If you're ready to talk, don't bottle it up any longer.

Let us go through it with you. The Samaritans

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THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by TOM STEVENSON

Going the whole hog on whisky

Especially at this time of year when investment folk gather round blazing log fires with a wee dram to counter the frost and snow outside, their thoughts sometimes idly turn to the idea of investing in a cask or two of malt whisky with a view to bottling it to drink themselves, or selling it back at a staggering profit when age has made it rare and valuable.

You can buy a hoghead containing 250 litres of new whisky for as little as £900, compared with a current retail value of between £4,000 and £5,000. But before you can hope to get at the retail value you will have to pay for the storage charges, the insurance and the inevitable losses through evaporation from the cask, known quaintly as the angels' share, before you can hope to have a commodity that you could bottle and drink yourself, give to your friends or re-sell to a whisky retailer or perhaps a blender.

There is also no guarantee that the malt you would be buying is desirable. The big distilleries such as Glenfiddich will rigorously prosecute anyone who claims to have any Glenfiddich for resale.

Most of the other best-known names such as Macallan, Highland Park or Bowmore sell only to other distillers for blending and refuse to supply speculators, although it seems some casks sold for blending do turn up on the retail market, where they will cost substantially more, at least £3,000 for a hoghead. There are also stocks of casks of whiskies from defunct distilleries on offer, but there is also a fair amount of second-rate malt around.

In fact there are only one or two well-known distilleries, Springbank, based at Campbeltown, and Tunnock near Inverness, which will sell single malt in casks direct to investors and keep them in bond until you want to resell them. There are a couple of London-based retailers, Milroy's of Soho which specialises in Springbank at £900 a hoghead including 10 years' free storage and insurance, and La Reserve, which offers Springbank in a variety of different casks, sherry, bourbon, port, and now, in 1996, Madeira casks at prices from £650 to £1,200. After 12 years each hoghead could yield around 450 standard size bottles.

Advertisements appear from time to time from agents offering named single malts at two to four times those prices.

But there is no guarantee that they will be around to repurchase your in-

vestment when you eventually want to sell. If you are tempted by a leaflet advertising an exotic investment check precisely what it is you are buying, where it is and who pays the storage and insurance costs.

Jacques Vert bombshell

Hit by fragile consumer demand and freakish weather, most retailers have been finding the going tough. But yesterday's announcement from Jacques Vert, the formal wear manufacturer and retailer, was dismal by any standards.

Shares slumped from 181p to 115p when it emerged that profit for the full year will be almost wiped out by one-off costs and poorer sales. Orders for the spring/summer season are also 8 per cent lower due to the poor trading environment. This follows a disappointing autumn when the warm weather denied sales. The market had been primed for a disappointment in November when the company warned profits would be dented by significant capital costs involved in opening more

in-store concessions. But this bombshell was worse than expected.

Pre-tax profits in the six months to October slumped from £1.3m to just £366,000 due to the £750,000 of store-fitting costs as it transfers its wholesale business with House of Fraser to a concession operation. Analysts expect the group to do little more than break even over the full year. The interim dividend is being maintained but there must be doubts how long that can continue.

The company's main problem now is that it risks losing support due to a series of misfortunes that make it look accident-prone.

A year ago it invested in new technology in its manufacturing operations but found this disrupted by teething problems. It has also suffered from management turmoil at the factories.

In addition to these self-inflicted wounds the company has been competing in a tough arena against an improved Marks & Spencer and the rejuvenated Next.

After this latest disappointment Jacques Vert is likely to be saddled with a lower rating. The company says the balancing of wholesaling with a higher proportion of retail sales is less risky and that new lines for the autumn

winter collection look promising. Bolder investors may find the stock attractive, especially as one winning season can transform fashion fortunes. But for more cautious souls the shares are best avoided.

Trinity set for further growth

Trinity Holdings, the specialist vehicle manufacturer, won City approval yesterday when it secured the services of Vanni Treves as the new non-executive chairman. The shares rose 2p to 353p after news that a replacement had been found for Geoff Holyhead, one of the four managers to lead Trinity's buyout.

The appointment of Mr Treves, chairman of engineering groups BBA and McKechnie, should help steady nervous investors who have been worrying whether the Trinity bubble is about to burst. Since its flotation 30 months ago it has outperformed the stock market by about 90 per cent. Sustained above average earnings growth have made Trinity a City favourite and won it a high premium. But how long can it last? The answer is, that there is scope for further outperformance over the next couple of years.

Carmichael, Trinity's fire engine builder, was the only disappointment in the latest set of interim results, thanks to its over-dependence on domestic market.

Export orders and a contract with the Ministry of Defence will help turn around the division's fortunes. With the other operations in top gear, there seems little reason to believe further growth is threatened. Bus registrations in the UK grew 36 per cent last year, as deregulation encourages bus and coach operators to invest in new vehicles after a decade of decline.

Export sales, especially to emerging markets, are forecast to continue rising rapidly, with some 40 per cent of sales going abroad. Sales of self-assembly bus kits are booming, and they also provide healthy margins of about 15-20 per cent.

A portfolio of new products has given Trinity a solid base in niche markets, which offers some protection against a decline in growth of its mainstream business. With full-year profit forecasts put at around £16.5m, Trinity is on a price/earnings ratio of 17. This is a premium, but worth paying.

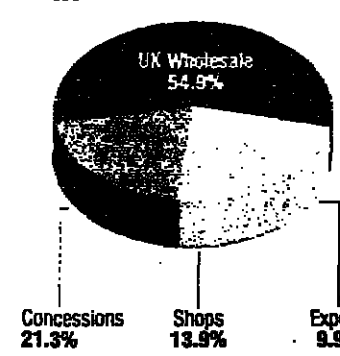
Jacques Vert: at a glance

Market value: £11m, share price 115p

Five year record	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	6 months
Turnover (£m)	40.9	39.3	45.1	49.7	24.1	22.5
Pre-tax profits (£m)	4.65	1.03	2.09	3.13	1.36	0.366
Earnings per share (pence)	40.7	8.8	13.5	22.1	9.6	2.7
Dividends per share (pence)	2.0	3.0	4.5	6.75	2.25	2.25

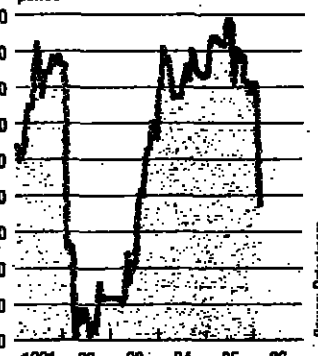
Sales by market

1995



Share price

pence



John Willcock CITY DIARY

Hitting the jackpot with a low-flying office stapler

City punters have been seized by National Lottery fever as the "roll-over" jackpot spirals ever higher. But the chances of winning the £30m-plus jackpot appear to be considerably less certain than other rather less attractive things happening to one.

For instance, a group of actuaries was yesterday mulling over the fact that 18 people in the UK were killed in accidents with office equipment in 1994. Taking the UK working population at around 25 million, and considering that there are 14 million permutations to the numbers making up the winning lottery figure, the actuaries concluded the following: that you would need to purchase at least 10 lottery tickets to have a better chance of winning the jackpot than of being killed by office equipment. So be warned: get out there and buy the tickets or watch out for that low-flying stapler.

For the City executive who has everything, The Hang-Em-High Game Rack. Christmas may have been and gone but this useful invention from Hilltop Products of Newbury, Berkshire, is just the thing to transport home your recently slaughtered game in the back of the car.

The man behind the invention, James Bulmer of Purley Farm Stables, says the rack will retail at £19.95. "At pre-

Sometimes just nothing seems to go right, as the London Stock Exchange's chairman, John Kemp-Welch, can testify. Yesterday the chairman was preparing himself for the tricky business of explaining to an expectant press conference exactly why the chief executive Michael Lawrence was leaving. Just as he was about to begin to address the restive hacks.

Mr Kemp-Welch leaned down to the microphone on the desk in front of him and asked: "Can you hear me at the back?" Unfortunately the mike belonged to a BBC Radio man who was kneeling down in front of the desk. The embarrassed radio man exclaimed: "I don't work here," at which point the gathered hacks cruelly guffawed. Mr Kemp-Welch is made of stern stuff, however, and fairly rattled though the press questions. When his own adviser told him to wind it up, he replied: "Oh no, I'm really beginning to enjoy this."



Hoping: In line for the lottery

Photograph: Dale Cherry

sent the most common practice is to pile the game one on top of the other in the back of the car boot. Sadly, some of the meat will go off, especially if the birds are warm and damp.

"In fact, the only way to transport game is to make sure that they are hung either from the neck or the legs whilst allowing a certain amount of air to circulate freely around the carcasses. This is achieved by the Hang-Em-High, a system of rods that fit together in the boot of your car, according to Mr Bulmer.

Nothing gets the small business lobby quite so worked

up as the case with which bankrupt businesses can avoid paying back unsecured creditors. The subject is not new, however, having been a hot topic in the 16th century.

Debtors at that time were able to claim sanctuary from their creditors within certain city areas stipulated by the church. Thomas More in his *History of King Richard III* written in about 1513, described the sanctuaries as having become a rabble of thieves, murderers and malicious traitors.

David Graham QC, an insolvency specialist who retired from Coopers & Lybrand two years ago, is writing a history of English law on going bust during the year 1543 to 1603, and according to Coopers' insolvency journal, *Phoenix*, pretty bloodthirsty work it is too. For instance, in certain cases the church was allowed to dig up the corpses of dead bankrupts and remove them from consecrated ground. In 16th century Italy bankrupts had a dreadful time:

"Insulting and reviling procedures were ordinary, such as the wearing of distinctive headgear."

Tokyo boost for world markets

DIANE COYLE
Economics Correspondent

Shares in Tokyo led the way in a sparkling performance by world financial markets yesterday. Japan's first trading day of the New Year.

After the opening ceremonies, the stockmarket surged by nearly 4 per cent to the highest since September 1994. The Nikkei index leapt nearly 750 points to close at 20,618, and volumes in the half-day trading session were heavy.

US markets took up the baton, enjoying their third buoyant day in succession. The dollar jumped to its highest level against the yen for nearly two years. It passed the ¥106 level to reach its highest since March 1994.

The Dow passed its previous record to reach a high of 5227 after the first hour of trading, before losing some of the gains. By midday in New York the index was up just over 15 points at 5209.25. The US Treasury market moved half a point higher during the morning.

Dealers said the driving force behind the surging markets was positive sentiment about investing in the US. "The focus is the budget talks, and an economic backdrop weak enough to favour lower interest rates," said Elias Bikhazi at Deutsche Morgan Grenfell in New York.

The attraction of US markets was cited as an important fac-

tor behind the dollar's recent burst of strength. Automatic traders took it higher yesterday after it passed ¥105.

In turn, the stronger dollar spells relief for Japanese exporters. Corporate earnings should improve dramatically if the Japanese currency remains weak. Shares of Honda and Toyota, heavily dependent on exports, did especially well.

Foreign investors were reported to be prominent in yesterday's trading in Tokyo. This was reflected in huge gains in some of the blue chip stocks such as Canon, Sony and Toshiba. Analysts said the new buoyancy of the Nikkei would give Japanese institutions the confidence to invest more abroad.

The dollar is expected to remain in the range ¥105-110 for the time being. "That is the level of both Japan and the US are happy about," said Yoshinori Matsushita, foreign exchange manager at Mitsubishi Bank. A higher level would start to hurt American exporters, whose complaints would have particular force in election year.

The White House said yesterday that President Clinton and Republican leaders in Congress were now "writing a real budget agreement." The row has kept the Federal government partially closed since 16 December, but financial markets are counting on a seven-year deal to balance the budget within the next few weeks.



Women workers at the Tokyo Stock Exchange wore kimonos for the annual ceremony yesterday to open the first day's trading of the year

Photograph: AP

Accountants 'stunned' by Finance Bill's complexity

PAUL WALLACE
and NIC CICCUTTI

Kenneth Clarke's Budget speech lasted just over an hour: the Finance Bill, published yesterday contained nearly 200 clauses and weighed in at over 400 pages long, 60 pages longer than last year.

It came under immediate assault for its length and complexity - from both politicians and accountants.

"The public and business will find it incredible that a government who are so long on

rhetoric of lifting burdens and ending bureaucracy today fail to match their words with reality and instead deluge the public with such a huge volume of extra legislation," said Andrew Smith, Shadow Chief Secretary to the Treasury.

The proposals on executive share options, and the costs and administrative burdens on businesses and the self-employed of the new self-assessment taxation regime, were two parts of the bill which Labour intends to scrutinise closely.

The Opposition will also be

pressing for further consultation on the taxation of gifts and bonds - which takes up almost 100 pages of the legislation - as well as pressing again for tax breaks for new capital investment and using capital gains tax to encourage longer-term investment.

Leading accountants also criticised the length and complexity of the bill. "I was stunned at the fact that it was in two volumes this year," said David Oliver, a senior corporate tax partner at Coopers & Lybrand.

"The way in which it's been written is no different from in the past," said Ian Barlow, UK head of tax at KPMG. He added that the clauses written by private sector draftsmen, in a Treasury experiment, did not show any improvement on those drafted by the Parliamentary Counsel.

Accountants said that the bill did not contain any unexpected additions as in the one last year. "There don't seem to be any nasty surprises as in the previous bill," said Kevin Paterson, corporate tax partner at

Ernst & Young. They also welcomed some measures in the bill, notably turning a number of extra-statutory concessions into law and revisions to the new landfill tax.

However, Penny Hamilton, VAT partner at Coopers & Lybrand, said that the scale of VAT anti-avoidance measures in the legislation was another indication of the enormity of the task confronting would-be tax simplifiers. "We're going to be in this cat and mouse game for some time to come," she said.

About 14 million savers and

26 million taxpayers will benefit from the measures in the bill. Among those gaining are small savers who will no longer have to pay tax on savings, such as building society accounts, at the new rate of 24 per cent.

The Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, intends to cut the tax to 20 per cent, adding £4 to every £100 of interest received already. However, retired people whose earnings are below the tax threshold or who are already in the 20 per cent tax bracket, will not benefit from the change. The personal allowance

for people aged 65 to 74 is set to be £4,910, up from £4,630.

Other changes include a proposal not to tax compensation paid by insurance companies to those who were mis-sold personal pensions. In most cases, pension transfer victims would normally be reinstated into the scheme they had left or if that was not possible, their personal pension would be topped up. But in instances, such as when the account-holder has died, where compensation must be paid in cash directly to the estate, it will not be taxed.

Inchcape disposal raises £56.2m

MATHEW HORSMAN

Inchcape, the international car distributor, will book an exceptional profit of £29m following the sale of its Quarry Bay site in Hong Kong to Pacific Century Group for £56.25m.

The move is the latest in a series of asset disposals by the distressed company, which has recently sounded profit warnings and been forced to make write-offs of more than £100m due to the declining competitiveness of Japanese car manufacturers worldwide.

The site, owned by Inchcape subsidiary Crown Motors, the Hong Kong-based distributor of Toyota, presently houses Crown Motors' head office, one of six Hong Kong service centres and one of eight area showrooms.

Pacific Century plans to demolish the 12-floor building on the site to make way for a new commercial development.

During the year, Inchcape said the Crown Motors facilities would be moved to new, purpose-built headquarters in Hong Kong.

As part of the sale agreement, Inchcape has already received 15 per cent of the purchase price, with the balance due at the end of the month.

The proceeds will be used to develop Crown Motors' businesses and to reduce debt.

City analysts have pruned back profit forecasts for 1996 to £160-£170m, but some expect Inchcape to recover within the next two years. The poor performance has been directly related to its over-dependence on sales of Japanese cars, which have suffered as a result of the rising yen. The company hopes to build up its car components and accessories divisions and to develop distribution agreements with non-Japanese car manufacturers. It is also planning to float its insurance broking business, Bain Hogg.

A turnaround would mark a break with recent trends, as Inchcape has underperformed the UK market by 60 per cent over the past two years. The share price and profits have taken such a hammering it was removed from the FT-SE 100 last month. Sir Colin Marshall, formerly chief executive of BA, was appointed non-executive chairman from 1 January.

market report/shares

TAKING STOCK

DATA BANK

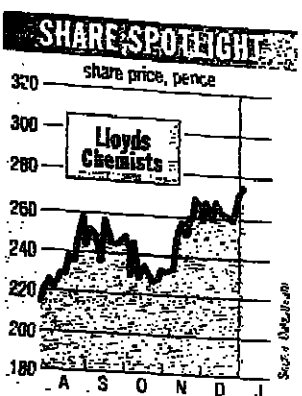
FT-SE 100
3714.1 -1.5

FT-SE 250
4071.4 +17.5

FT-SE 350
1845.2 +1.2

SEAQ VOLUME
735.2m shares,
32,348 bargains

Gifts Index
95.64 +0.36



Thorn spins high on hopes of a fast demerger

Hopes that Thorn EMI's long-awaited demerger will be unveiled soon sent the shares spinning 50p higher to 1.585p. The rush by Forte to split its catering and hotel operations once Granada emerged as a hostile bidder is thought to have speeded up the corporate minds at Thorn who decided in July to split the music and rental operations.

The advantages of such a move have been pressed on the group for years. But three years earlier it had turned its back on breaking up.

Walt Disney was among those thought to be hovering, keen to buy what is regarded as one of the best music businesses in the world.

There is thought to have been considerable aggravation in the Thorn boardroom over the split. It is said directors

were divided into three camps: those supporting a two-way split (music and rental); a three-way break up (music, rental and retail); and an entrenched band opposed to any division of the spoils.

The stock market believes Thorn has settled on a simple demerger - rental, which will include the retail business, and music.

This week the group added to its rental muscle in the US by splashing out £65.5m for two companies.

With details of the split expected, analysts are busy calculating the likely value of the demerged group: a figure of 1,900p a share, with the music side enjoying the more glamorous rating, is a popular guess. If they are right the scope for Thorn to make further headway is clear.

British Airways was another flying high, inspired by a 7.9 per cent increase in December



MARKET REPORT

DEREK PAIN

Stock market reporter of the year

traffic and a £10m UBS profit upgrade to £580m.

Suggestions the group is on the verge of clinching a deal with American Airlines was another factor which helped fuel an 18p gain to 488p. Currently BA has a link with USAir, where it has a 25 per cent shareholding. There has been talk BA will sell its USAir interest which could restrict its American operations.

But American Airlines could provide the internal carry-over service which BA needs for its trans-Atlantic flights.

British Aerospace, on Orange flotation considerations and talk of Middle Eastern contracts, gained 18p to 806p.

The rest of the market failed to continue its record breaking run. In morning trading the FT-SE 100 index reached a new trading peak, up 7.4 points at 3,723, but by the close was nursing a modest 1.5 fall at 3,714.1, despite a firm opening New York performance.

There is a belief the market could move ahead next week when many of the leading investment managers, who are inclined to take an extended New Year holiday, are back at their desks.

Second line shares, as measured by the FT-SE 250 index, continued to edge towards their peak, achieved nearly two years ago.

Takeover speculation remained in the insurance sector with Britannic up 14p at 813p and Refuge 11p higher at 485p. The Halifax Building Society is looking at an insurance deal and Liverpool Victoria is said to be stalking London & Manchester, up 8p at 438p.

Without a bid the insurance - and, indeed, most financials - look overvalued and unless corporate action breaks out soon the shares could be under pressure.

Takeover talk again swirled around Lloyds Chemists with Asda said to be prepared to offer 350p a share. UniChem was also in the frame. It was enough to lift Lloyds another 6p to 276p.

British Steel added 6.75p to 168.25p as US steel prices were lifted and Hanson continued its new year rally, gaining 6.5p to 203.75p with the steel conglomerate's 7.6 per cent dividend yield attracting

increasing attention. It is regarded as a better dividend play than British Gas (7 per cent) and even P&O (7.8 per cent).

Spirit shares strengthened on suggestions Guinness, the biggest Scotch whisky group, was about to lift prices by around 3 per cent. Guinness rose 5p to 487p and the Highland Distilleries, the subject of recent sell advice, 13p to 342p.

The generators dimmed on a rumoured Goldman Sachs caution. National Power lost 8p to 436p and PowerGen 8p to 520p.

Lachap's Hong Kong sale and the improving currency climate helped the shares 8p higher to 261p but Jacques Vert, a fashion group, was in tatters, off 66p to 115p, following a profit plunge.

Winchester Multi Media tumbled 15p to 56p on its publishing loss.

□ Dailywin, watchmaker for many leading brands, held at 158p. Times has 5 per cent and is expected to exercise its option to increase its holding to 20 per cent in March at the 128p the shares were floated nearly a year ago. The company has its management in Hong Kong, manufacturing in China and a Bermuda domicile. Butterfield Securities recommends the shares. Analyst David Fitzsimon is looking for profits of £2.8m this year and £4.2m next.

□ Union, the financial group, is attracting attention again with results due in March. There has been busy trading in the past two days with the shares up 5p at 97p. A major shareholder may have increased his stake: one possibility is Joseph Lewis who has built a 25 per cent interest in auctioneer Christie International.

Share Price Data

Prices are in sterling except where stated. The yield is last year's dividend, grossed up by 50 per cent, as a percentage of the share price. The price/earnings (P/E) ratio is the share price divided by last year's earnings per share, excluding exceptional items. Other details: ex/£ rights/£ ex-dividend as £ ex/£ Unlisted Securities Market a suspended unit. Party Paid p.m. Nil Paid Shares.

The Independent Index

The index allows you to access real-time share prices by phone from Seas. Simply dial 091 233 333, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. To access the latest financial reports and other data, dial 091 233 333, followed by the 4-digit code printed next to each share. For a detailed description of the Independent Index, including its features and benefits, please contact our sales team on 091 233 333. For assistance, call our helpline 071 475 4355 (9.30am - 5.30pm). Call cost 25p per minute (excl. VAT), and 40p at all other times. Call charges include.

Market leaders: Top 20 volumes

Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume	Stock	Volume
British Steel	1,000,000	British Gas	1,000,000	British Airways	1,000,000
British Petroleum	1,000,000	British Telecom	1,000,000	British Airways	1,000,000
British Airways	1,000,000	British Airways	1,000,000	British Airways	1,000,000
British Airways	1,000,000	British Airways	1,000,000	British Airways	1,000,000

FT-SE 100 index hour by hour

Time	Index	Time	Index
Open 3718.1 up 2.5		11.00 3722.5 up 6.7	
09.00 3714.4 down 4.2		12.00 3714.4 down 4.2	
10.00 3718.0 up 3.6		13.00 3714.0 down 4.6	

Index-linked

Index	Value	Index	Value
Index-linked	95.64	Index-linked	95.64
Index-linked	95.64	Index-linked	95.64

Shorts

Shorts	Value	Shorts	Value
Shorts	100	Shorts	100
Shorts	100	Shorts	100

Mediums

Mediums	Value	Mediums	Value
Mediums	100	Mediums	100
Mediums	100	Mediums	100

Longs

Longs	Value	Longs	Value
Longs	100	Longs	100
Longs	100	Longs	100

Recent issues

Recent issues	Value	Recent issues	Value
Recent issues	100	Recent issues	100
Recent issues	100	Recent issues	100

Banks, Merchant

Bank	Price	Change
Barclays	100.00	+0.50
HSBC	100.00	+0.50
London & Manchester	100.00	+0.50

Banks, Retail

Bank	Price	Change
Barclays	100.00	+0.50
HSBC	100.00	+0.50
London & Manchester	100.00	+0.50

Breweries

Brewery	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Building/Construction

Building	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Chemicals

Chemical	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Electronics

Electronic	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Engineering

Engineering	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Food Manufacturers

Food	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Gas Distribution

Gas	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Health Care

Health	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Household Goods

Household	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Index-linked

Index	Value	Index	Value
Index-linked	95.64	Index-linked	95.64
Index-linked	95.64	Index-linked	95.64

Shorts

Shorts	Value	Shorts	Value
Shorts	100	Shorts	100
Shorts	100	Shorts	100

Mediums

Mediums	Value	Mediums	Value
Mediums	100	Mediums	100
Mediums	100	Mediums	100

Longs

Longs	Value	Longs	Value
Longs	100	Longs	100
Longs	100	Longs	100

Recent issues

Recent issues	Value	Recent issues	Value
Recent issues	100	Recent issues	100
Recent issues	100	Recent issues	100

Diversified Industrials

Industrial	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Engineering Vehicles

Vehicle	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Extractive Industries

Extractive	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Electricity

Electricity	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Electronics

Electronic	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Engineering

Engineering	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Food Manufacturers

Food	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Gas Distribution

Gas	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Health Care

Health	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Household Goods

Household	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
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Beck's	100.00	+0.50
Carlsberg	100.00	+0.50

Health Care

Health	Price	Change
Adnams	100.00	+0.50
Beck's	100.00	+0.50

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Handicappers saving from yesterday's hero

Racing
JOHN COBB

A year ago Celtic Swing received the most glowing references from the handicappers who compile the International Classification. This year, almost as if they were blaming him for letting them down, they have smothered him.

Then he was given the highest rating achieved by a juvenile on turf in the 17-year history of the Classification, at 130 a full 6lb clear of his contemporaries. Clearly, after a season in which he failed to win a British Classic, Celtic Swing could not command such impressive figures again, but having erred on the optimistic side last year, the handicappers have not been so generous to the dark bay colt this time. On a figure of 124 he is 6lb behind Britain's best, Lammtarra, but also deemed 5lb inferior to Bahri, whom he

beat on the only two occasions on which they met.

At least Celtic Swing has an opportunity to prove that the first set of figures came nearer to the truth as he remains in training this year with the Dubai World Cup as his first target. Lammtarra, who despite heading the figures for three-year-olds and upwards, was allowed a rating of only 130, will have



Gibbs: great sadness

no opportunity to improve his status having been whisked off to stud. His mark is some 11lb below Dancing Brave, the highest-rated horse since these records began.

Despite clinching the big race treble of Derby, King George and Arc last achieved 34 years before by Mill Reef, Lammtarra languishes behind other recent champions in Reference Point (rated 135), Warming (133), Old Vic and Zilzal (134), Dayjur (133), Generous (137) and St Jovite (135).

Also of concern is that Lammtarra is rated 2lb inferior to America's Cigar (132), who tops the world list as the Classification fully embrace the European and North American form for the first time.

Britain's senior handicapper, Geoffrey Gibbs, argued that it was impossible to rate Lammtarra any higher. "There is a requirement within racing that we need heroes and I

wouldn't disagree with that," he said. "Lammtarra was latched on to as being a hero and all sorts of comparisons were made, notably with Mill Reef, and I am afraid most of them were very wide of the mark."

"We are not damning Lammtarra, but he hasn't in his life beaten a horse by more than a length. He was very courageous but never showed the brilliant turn of foot Cigar has shown time and time again."

"Cigar was five and it was a great sadness that Lammtarra was never asked a serious question against three-year-olds when he would have been a four-year-old."

"Everything he was asked he did, probably through courage, but he didn't sit part three of the examination. His were unique achievements but we can't say he was a world-beater because of what he achieved."

And, while now conceding that in the early years of the

INTERNATIONAL CLASSIFICATION'S TOP 30 TWO-YEAR-OLDS									
Rank	Name	Country	Trainer	Owner	Rating	Trainer	Owner	Rating	Trainer
1	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	128	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
2	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	127	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
3	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	126	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
4	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	125	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
5	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	124	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
6	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	123	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
7	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	122	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
8	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	121	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
9	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	120	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
10	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	119	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
11	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	118	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
12	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	117	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
13	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	116	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
14	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	115	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
15	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	114	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
16	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	113	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
17	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	112	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
18	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	111	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
19	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	110	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
20	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	109	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
21	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	108	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
22	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	107	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
23	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	106	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
24	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	105	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
25	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	104	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
26	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	103	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
27	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	102	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
28	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	101	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
29	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	100	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB
30	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB	99	Almshurst	United Kingdom	W R Hearn	GB

Classification the ratings were 5-7lb too high, Gibbs stands by the more recent assessments. "Dancing Brave's Arc victory was a unique performance. Bering was an outstanding horse in his own right but the way Dancing Brave beat him was quite remarkable."

The search for this year's hero begins with a trawl through the juvenile ratings (above). Almhurst's figure of 126 at the

top of the tree is not as commanding as Celtic Swing's last year, but only Royal Applause, on 124, is rated within 6lb of the 2,000 Guineas and Derby favourite. "He demonstrated his immense versatility, answering everything he was asked most impressively," Gibbs said.

Classifications for the classics (C-C) and the 2,000 Guineas (2G) are on page 21. The 2,000 Guineas (2G) is on page 21. The 2,000 Guineas (2G) is on page 21.

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Warming for Oats' backers

Kim Bailey received a pre-King George VI Chase filly with a 653-1 treble at Nottingham yesterday. The trainer, who will be represented in the King George at Sandown tomorrow by Master Oats and Book Of Music, had not saddled a winner for al-

RICHARD EDMONDSON
NAP: Court Melody
(Towcester 1.20)
NB: Beauchamp Grace
(Towcester 2.20)

most a month, but returned to form with Dominie, the Bud Club and Fellow Countryman. With Norman Williamson injured, all three were ridden by different jockeys and Bailey has yet to confirm who will be on board Master Oats - backed from 11-2 to 4-1 with Ladbrokes - at Sandown. He is clearly hoping that Coulton will defeat, allowing Jamie Osborne to resume a partnership that began at Chesham. Mick Fitzgerald will ride Book Of Music.

RESULTS

LINGFIELD

1.00: 1. ERLING (C) 12.0.1. 2. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 3. Royal 12.0.1. 4. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 5. Royal 12.0.1. 6. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 7. Royal 12.0.1. 8. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 9. Royal 12.0.1. 10. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 11. Royal 12.0.1. 12. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 13. Royal 12.0.1. 14. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 15. Royal 12.0.1. 16. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 17. Royal 12.0.1. 18. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 19. Royal 12.0.1. 20. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 21. Royal 12.0.1. 22. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 23. Royal 12.0.1. 24. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 25. Royal 12.0.1. 26. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 27. Royal 12.0.1. 28. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 29. Royal 12.0.1. 30. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 31. Royal 12.0.1. 32. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 33. Royal 12.0.1. 34. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 35. Royal 12.0.1. 36. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 37. Royal 12.0.1. 38. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 39. Royal 12.0.1. 40. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 41. Royal 12.0.1. 42. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 43. Royal 12.0.1. 44. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 45. Royal 12.0.1. 46. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 47. Royal 12.0.1. 48. Newell (C) 12.0.1. 49. 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FIFTH TEST: England surrender the series as their batting falls apart amid umpiring controversy at Newlands
Cronje mars S Africa's triumph

DEREK PRINGLE

reports from Cape Town
England 153 and 157
South Africa 244 and 70-0
(South Africa win by 10 wickets)

It has taken nearly seven weeks to split these sides but, when the moment came at Newlands yesterday, it was South Africa, their fast bowlers finding collective form, who blew England away and won the match by 10 wickets. It was no less than they deserved for outbowling England in a low-scoring match that decided the series as well. When Gary Kirsten hit the winning run an hour after tea, the relief was palpable as Hansie Cronje hugged each member of his team in turn.

Cronje has been under severe pressure this series, not least because he has possessed the match-winning bowlers. Another failure here, particularly after his own lean series with the bat, could well have prompted a change in the captaincy and it was no surprise when he gratefully held his Free State team-mate Allan Donald, the man of this match as well as the series, to his chest.

However, just when you feel South Africa's inadequacies have been rumbled, they seem to cobble together a match-winning performance. It is a pattern that has marked their play ever since their return to international cricket and a knack England would dearly love to have. Instead of conjuring wins from nowhere, England tend towards calamity when things go badly, and this is the second time in six months that England have lost inside three days.

However, if the pitch against the West Indies at Edgbaston could be held directly to blame, the one here was nowhere near as lethal, and some poor batting by both sides helped contribute to the low scores.

For some time now, the runs of Michael Atherton, the England captain, have been his side's lifeblood, allowing others playing around him to come to life. After his two low scores here, England seem to haemorrhage wickets and it was no coincidence that the 153 and 157 scored in this match were their two lowest totals of the series. Atherton acknowledged that England had not batted well as a unit, saying: "When some of the batters look back, they'll think that they've had a moderate tour. It's hard to win a Test series when that happens."

When play began yesterday, they needed a lead of at least 150 if they were ever going to raise the opposition's pulse above stroll-rate. In the end, the 67 runs needed to win were belted from just 94 balls, showing this pitch to be a far more placid beast than the one present on the first day of the match. However, you might not have thought so, watching England bat poorly on it for the second time in the match. True, two of their batsmen got rough decisions when looking set, but to lose four wickets in 10 balls, as

they did in mid-afternoon, amounted to little more than tired and sloppy cricket.

When play began, England started where they had left off the previous evening with Angus Fraser being dropped. Had Adams held the catch, it would have walked any "Classic catch" competition, not an accolade that would have come Cullinan's way as he held Stewart's snicked catch at first slip.

It was another loose shot from Stewart, whose static footwork is unable to cope with the demands made by the new ball. If he is to serve England as well as his own best interests at Test level, he should move down the order. With Fraser following Stewart just a few balls later, caught by Adams at leg gully as he fended off a short ball from Donald, England were 22 for 3. A slight revival followed, with Graham Thorpe and Robin Smith at the crease, but was cut short when Smith was given out caught behind off Adams, his bat clearly tucked behind his pad.

Instead of bringing despondency, the poor decision appeared to galvanise Thorpe into playing his best innings of the series. His eight Test innings here have amassed just 184 runs at an average of 26. He was, however, back close to his best yesterday, and he was quick to punish both Donald and McMillan whenever their length strayed.

Hick, too, played well. Soon after he and Thorpe had put on 50, the Worcestershire batsman thumped Adams twice in successive balls for mighty sixes back over the spinner's head. But, if England supporters had pinned their hopes on the pair providing a telling partnership they were short lived, once Hick was adjudged lbw to one that nipped back a touch too much to have hit leg-stump.

It was the rotten decision that started the rot. If curiosity killed the cat, then the added responsibility of batting at No 6 just as surely did for the Jack Russell, as he guided a short ball from Shaun Pollock to Andrew Hudson in the gully. Moments later the same fielder removed Thorpe, when his direct throw from short fine leg hit the stumps at the bowler's end with Thorpe well short of his ground.

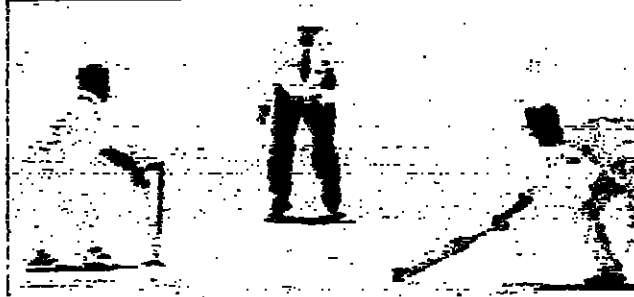
Bizarrely, the umpire Dave Orchard, who had got into a good position to make a decision, did not call for the replay, a move that prompted home supporters in the hospitality suites to create a rumpus. This led to Cronje protesting to the umpire and then to Thorpe. Eventually Orchard consulted his colleague, Steve Randell, at square leg and the replay was called for and Thorpe rightfully given out.

It was, however, a clear breach of International Cricket Council regulations on Cronje's part for which he was fined 50 per cent of his match fee. More worryingly, though, it was another clear case of the game being ruled by television. After that, the England tail showed all its usual aptitude for collapse as Pollock finished with the distinguished figures of 5 for 32.



Conduct unbecoming: how a captain made his influence felt

- 1 Paul Adams bowls to Mike Watkinson, who guides the ball to backward point.
- 2 Graham Thorpe sets off for a single from the non-striker's end but is sent back by Watkinson as Andrew Hudson fields the ball.
- 3 Hudson hurls the ball to the bowler's end and gains a direct hit on the stumps. Adams appeals.
- 4 Umpire Dave Orchard, standing in his second Test, rules Thorpe not out.
- 5 A roar from the hospitality boxes, where people are watching the television replays, alerts the South African fielders to the fact that Thorpe was short of his ground.
- 6 Hansie Cronje, South Africa's captain, asks Orchard to call on the third umpire.
- 7 After Orchard appears to refuse, Cronje and Brian McMillan engage in earnest conversation with Thorpe.
- 8 Orchard sees this and goes to consult his fellow umpire, Steve Randell. Orchard eventually calls for third umpire.
- 9 Thorpe is given out.



Hansie Cronje, South Africa's captain, talks to Graham Thorpe (top) as umpire Dave Orchard walks away after initially failing to ask the third umpire to rule on the England batsman's run-out (above). Main photograph: Allsport

The umpire's decision is no longer final

ROBERT WINDER
reports from Cape Town

One thing became clear at Newlands yesterday: the umpire's decision is not final. Hansie Cronje, the South Africa captain, was fined half his match fee of 6,000 rand (£1,065) after a noisy controversy surrounding the was-he, wasn't-he dismissal of Graham Thorpe.

Thorpe was given not out twice by umpire David Orchard, but in response to protests by Cronje and his team, not to mention a cheering crowd, the decision was finally referred to the television adjudicator.

Thorpe had slipped Adams fine down the leg side, was called for a sharp single, and Andrew Hudson promptly threw down the stumps at the bowler's end. It was a brilliant piece of fielding, the excellence of which was eclipsed by what followed. Orchard - who had already been responsible for one very subtle decision when he deemed Robin Smith to have nicked a ball that seemed to brush his knee (if anything) - gave Thorpe not out.

The 5,000 English supporters who had brought their banners to Cape Town breathed an audible gasp of relief. But then the noise changed. Up in the corporate boxes, the replay was showing that Thorpe was clearly out. The roar spread to the sunburnt groundlings in the open stands, and soon it was evident to everyone that justice had not been done.

Adams was back at his mark ready to bowl again, but the other fielders formed a gaggle in the outfield. Cronje approached Orchard, who shook his head, gave Thorpe not out again and took up his position behind the stumps. Then he changed his mind and spoke to Thorpe. Cronje joined in (suggestions that there was an altercation were firmly denied), and finally Orchard trailed over to talk with the umpire at square leg.

It was immediately obvious that Cronje had broken the rules and would have to be penalised. The International Cricket Council regulation governing third umpires says that players may not appeal to the umpire to use the replay system. Cronje broke this commandment, but in so doing he exposed how poorly it is framed.

If players are not allowed to appeal, then one would not expect their appeal to prevail. The same regulation urges the umpire to "take a commonsense approach". Orchard was in flagrant breach of this, both in failing to call for the replay at once, and then failing again when it was clear from the crowd that a mistake had been made.

Afterwards the match referee, Clive Lloyd, was at pains to defend Orchard. "He went to square leg to inquire if it was possible to ask for the technology. He thought he might have

made a mistake and it might be too late to rescind it. But the umpires do have a right to ask for a replay in that situation."

But Lloyd was in no doubt about Cronje's guilt. "Hansie went to Orchard and asked him what the situation was. He's not allowed to do that. It was dissent and I had no option but to fine him."

Bob Woolmer, the South Africa coach, suggested that television be used routinely. "I think the ICC should look at the rule," he said. "Whenever run-outs and stumpings are close, then they should go to the third umpire immediately. Immediately."

Ray Illingworth, not surprisingly, expressed some dismay at the idea that the fielding side, and the crowd, could persuade an umpire to change his mind. "The right decision was made," he said. "But I wasn't too happy with the way it was made. Seeing that the umpire had said not out twice, I think they should have gone ahead and bowled the next ball."

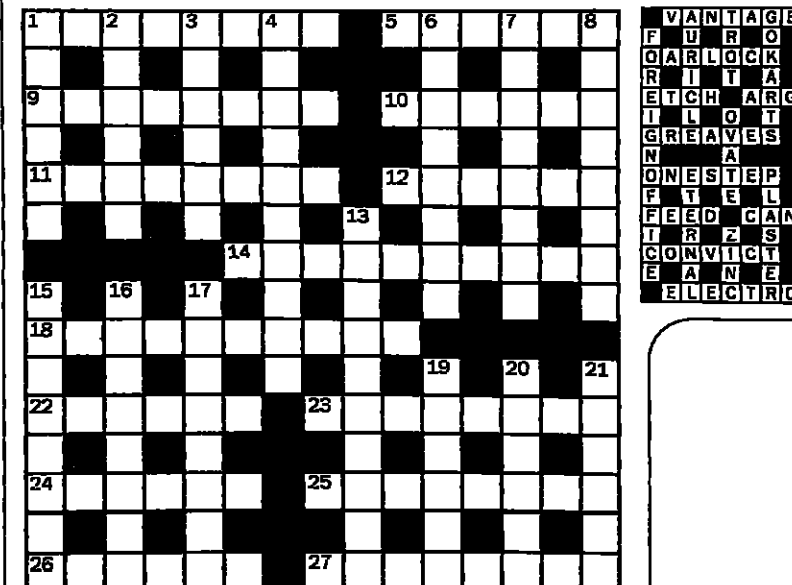
The only reason Orchard could have refrained from calling for the replay in the first place is that he was quite sure that Thorpe was not out. The third umpire is the one with the head-iest eye - it is only a matter of time before it is made the boss. This was the first time that people power has transformed a crucial decision in a Test match, but it might not be the last. Soon, umpires might no longer referee; they will simply refer.

Newlands scoreboard

(Third day: England won toss)		SOUTH AFRICA - Second innings	
ENGLAND - First innings 153 (R A Smith 65, A A Donald 5-46)		D G Cork c Kallis to Pollock.....8 (28 min, 9 balls, 2 fours)	41
SOUTH AFRICA - First innings 244 (D J Cullinan 62, D I Richardson 5-3)		P J Morgan c Adams to Pollock.....9 (33 min, 35 balls)	27
ENGLAND - Second innings		D E Maloney not out.....0 (15 min, 11 balls)	2
(Overnight: 17 for 1)		Extras (b2, b5, nb5).....22	70
A J Stewart c Cullinan to Pollock.....7 (62 min, 40 balls, 1 four)		Total (for 6, 63 min, 15.4 overs).....70	
R A Smith c Richardson to Adams.....13 (59 min, 36 balls, 1 four)		Bowling: Cork 4-0-25-0 (nb2); Maloney 2-0-12-0; Morgan 4-0-8-0; Richardson 4-0-24-0; Hick 2-4-0-7-0 (one spell each).	
G R Thorpe run out (Hudson).....59 (162 min, 126 balls, 8 fours)		Progress: 50; 47 min, 11 overs. Innings closed: 4.22pm.	
A R C Fraser c Adams to Donald.....1 (2 min, 2 balls)			
G A Hick lbw to Pollock.....36 (59 min, 79 balls, 4 fours, 2 shares)		SOUTH AFRICA WON BY 10 WICKETS	
M Watson c Hudson to Pollock.....2 (4 min, 4 balls)		Umpires: D L Orchard and S G Randell. TV replay umpires: R E Leeson.	
M Watson run out to Adams.....0 (7 min, 4 balls)		Match referee: C H Lloyd.	
		Man of the match: A A Donald.	
		Adjudicator: M Mirza (chairman of West-ern Province selection committee).	

THE INDEPENDENT CROSSWORD

No. 2875, Friday 5 January By Phil



- ACROSS**
- 1 To consecrate is wrong in fact during second year (8)
 - 5 Indian 'welcome' had repulsed Indian transport? (6)
 - 9 Open University to give education, having introduced right programme aimed at the masses? (8)
 - 10 One who often rubs out note in orchestrated score (6)
 - 11 Protective garment completed in style (5-3)
 - 12 Become bored about extra writing that's repressed flight of wit (6)
 - 14 Huge drunk? (10)
 - 18 Fruit began to be transported in truck (10)
 - 22 Offering the prospect of sex? It should lie in the heart, on reflection (6)
- DOWN**
- 23 Writer with opinion brought in to stop having to lose leader (8)
 - 24 Introduction of gas into a pit recalled mystery (6)
 - 25 Affection before journey from landing-place (3-5)
 - 26 Wagering participation in football involves no header (6)
 - 27 Overwhelm one good woman with fruit (8)
 - 1 Scupper, in the drink (6)
 - 2 Indigenous new musical on the rise (6)
 - 3 The pollarded trees may be belonging to those people (6)
 - 4 Founder, one with connections to bring in college gifts? (10)
 - 6 Parts of cricket match always requiring someone in charge (8)
 - 7 Name omitted from legal claim, being absent-minded (8)
 - 8 It's apparent in what a woman keeps secret, according to tradition! (8)
 - 13 A bit of gratuitous anger is so re-expressed (10)
 - 15 Sad toll in section of wild-flower population? (8)
 - 16 One Zurich banker running short in New York? The shamel (8)
 - 17 Mother captured by red-skin craft (8)
 - 19 Die when one's dumped from great love-affair? (4,2)
 - 20 I stray in South Africa's mountain range (6)
 - 21 Bread in diet no longer fresh (though soft internal-ly) (6)

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Clinton versus Congress: President exploits divisions among opponents as prospects of ending bureaucratic logjam recede

Republicans pull out of budget crisis talks



Hands on: Senator Bob Dole, Vice-President Al Gore, President Clinton and Speaker Newt Gingrich at budget talks

JOHN CARLIN
Washington

Republican leaders cancelled a round of talks with President Bill Clinton yesterday as the partial shutdown of the government precipitated by disagreement between Congress and White House on the 1996 budget reached its 20th day.

The Republicans called off the planned session in order to regroup and plan their next moves, Republican sources in Congress said. But privately both sides were saying yesterday that they saw little sign of an early settlement. The increased tetchiness between the White House and Congress in the last two days has not helped, making it less likely that the Republicans in the House of Representatives will drop their

precondition for reopening the government: a detailed deal with the White House on the means to reach a balanced budget by 2002.

A closed-door meeting of House Republicans on Wednesday showed that more than twice as many favoured keeping the government shut as reopening it. This is not a position, however, which enjoys much popular support and President Clinton has been quick to take advantage of a split that has yawned this week between Republicans in the Senate and the House.

The Senate, led by Bob Dole the Republican majority leader, voted on Tuesday night to reopen government and pay the 760,000 government employees who have gone without their wages since 16 December. On

Wednesday morning the House voted against President Clinton began his offensive gently, complementing the Senate and wishing the House would follow suit. Then, as if smelling blood, he denounced the "unnatural disaster" the Republicans, driven by "a cynical political strategy", had brought upon the nation. Whereupon Richard Armitage, the leader of the Republican majority in the House, replied that the President was as much to blame as anybody.

Senator Dole and the House Speaker, Newt Gingrich, both of whom have been attending the budget talks this week, have yet to respond to the President's attack. In both cases with good reason. As Mr Clinton's likely rival in this year's presidential election, Senator Dole is keeping an eye on the polls and find-

ing that the majority of Americans want the shutdown to end. But since it was his move in the Senate on Tuesday that exposed the rift between moderates and zealots in the Republican camp he has chosen to keep quiet, for fear of deepening the divisions within the party and providing his rivals for the Republican presidential nomination with fresh ammunition.

As for Mr Gingrich, he has so far lived up to a New Year resolution to be more judicious in his public statements. His refusal to rise to the presidential bait has been taken by some commentators to suggest that he has become a hostage of the hardliners in his own party whom he led to victory in the November 1994 elections.

Commentary, Page 17
Markets, Page 18

Who is to blame for the shutdown of Uncle Sam?

John Carlin answers all the questions you wanted to ask about the crisis

Q: Who is shutting the US government and why?

A: The Republicans in the House of Representatives. The Republicans in the Senate, a more venerable and judicious bunch, voted with the Democrats on Tuesday to reopen the government. On Wednesday their House colleagues voted the measure down. The shutdown occurred in the first place because Congress, contrary to past practice when budget negotiations with the White House become deadlocked, has refused to provide the money to keep the government running. The idea of Newt Gingrich, the House Speaker, was to use the shutdown to press President Clinton into accepting the Republicans' holy grail: a balanced budget by the year 2002.

Q: But wasn't the deficit created by that great fiscal conservative Ronald Reagan? Why are the Republicans suddenly so concerned about it?

A: The deficit rose spectacularly during the Reagan years: he cut taxes but not, overall, spending. The Gingrich Republicans hold two contradictory ideas in their heads: they sanctify Ronald Reagan but quietly acknowledge he presided over a period of great budgetary recklessness (which they also blame on the then Democrat-controlled Congress). The Republicans also thought they had identified a vote-winner - selling the idea during the 1994 congressional elections that it was morally and economically wrong for the country, as a family, to be in debt. Republicans also argue, more soundly, that the country's long-term economic health depends on the lower interest rates and increased investment which a reduced, or eliminated, deficit will bring.

Q: How serious is the US budget deficit anyway?

A: Compared with many other countries in the world there is no immediate cause for concern. This year's federal deficit will be around \$160bn or 2.7 per cent of GDP. When Mr Clinton became President in 1992, it was 4.1 per cent of GDP and heading upwards. (Some of the improvement is due to Clinton; more to the economy). At the height of the Reaganomic experiment in 1983, the deficit was 6.3 per cent of GDP. The present figure compares with a 3.9 per cent deficit in Japan, 5 per cent in Britain and France, 7.4 per cent in Italy.

Q: Is the seven-year target for a balanced budget of any real importance?

A: President Clinton believes that it is not but, for fear of being seen to lack resolution and good husbandry, has been browbeaten by the Republicans into buying the idea. The seven-year target is of no greater or lesser significance than a six-, an eight- or a nine-year target. It reflects more the Republicans' belief that a line must be drawn somewhere.

Q: What is shut down?
A: Nine government departments have been partially shut

down. Among the departments affected are State, Labour, Interior and Health and Human Services. More than 280,000 government employees deemed "non-essential" from the nine departments have been off work since the crisis began on 16 December. They, plus another 480,000, have not received their wages.

Q: What is not shut?

A: All of the above departments are partially open. Fully open for business are the FBI and other federal police agencies; the Defence Department, the Congress, the White House and all state, as opposed to federal, government agencies.

Q: Does the US public care that its government is partially shut down?

A: Most Americans seem to care in the sense that the goings-on in Washington of the last three weeks deepen their cynicism about the motives and seriousness of the people who lead them. An ABC television poll showed that 12 per cent of Americans were directly, personally affected by the shutdown; 88 per cent were not.

Q: What kind of things do the Republicans want to cut to hit the target?

A: They seek to cut welfare costs: notably Medicare, the government programme of health assistance for the elderly; cash benefits for single, teenage mothers; food stamps for the poor; housing and disability programmes. They also seek to reduce spending on student loans and environmental protection.

Q: And the Democrats?

A: We don't know exactly what the Democrats want to do. The Republicans legitimately complain that, while Mr Clinton has said he shares their goal for a balanced budget, he has yet to provide a detailed proposal.

Q: What is the actual difference between them?

A: What the Democrats most object to in the Republican plan is that it aims to balance the budget both by slashing welfare and reducing taxes, including those on capital gains. The benefits of the tax cuts proposed by the Republicans would be enjoyed more by the rich - those in the \$200,000-plus bracket and those who have a stake in Wall Street. It is by successfully communicating this contradiction to the public that the Democrats have managed to end the year better than they began.

Q: Who is winning the propaganda battle?

A: Everybody is losing it. All sides look bad. Talk to ordinary people on the streets, watch them deliver their sound bites on TV, and you'll hear expressions like "They're all a bunch of idiots!" and "Don't they realise how foolish they're making America look?" Wednesday night's ABC poll, however, has shown, like other polls, that nearly twice as many people blame the Republicans as President Clinton.

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obituaries / gazette

Harry McLevy

Harry McLevy - Scottish Regional Officer of the Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Union (AEEU) - was an outstanding trade union leader. He had a wealth of experience at the sharp end. Communist Party educated, he was one of the generation of outstanding shop steward convenors that emerged in the Sixties and early Seventies and so alarmed the Tory tabloid leader writers of the day one would have thought anarchy and revolution were around the corner. Nothing could have been further from the truth.

McLevy was born in 1936, in Dundee. His mother was a millworker and his father a plasterer's helper in the local shipyard. His childhood, whilst poor, was happy, surrounded as he was by a close-knit and loving family.

Dundee was a city of jute, jam, shipbuilding and engineering, with strong radical traditions. Its Labour movement, with Communist Party members in key leadership positions, was exceptionally well organised. The young McLevy, serving his apprenticeship as a fitter in the local engineering factory, joined and became active in the Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU), whose local full-time officials and most of whose District Committee were Com-

munist Party members. McLevy himself joined the Party, serving on its Scottish Committee and National Executive.

After an altercation with a foreman, McLevy migrated to the Clyde to finish his apprenticeship in time to play a leading role in the apprentices' strike of 1959 which spread nationwide, forcing the engineering and shipbuilding employers to raise substantially the very low wages apprentices received in those days.

After National Service McLevy returned to his native city, quickly establishing a reputation in local trade union circles as an extremely capable activist and a gifted orator. He became shop steward convenor at the Caledonian Shipyard, President of the AEU Dundee District Committee and, in the Seventies, a member of the union's powerful 52-man supreme policy-making body, the National Committee.

At that time, before mass unemployment and anti-union laws seriously weakened unions, the AEU National Committee was powerful, its decisions binding on all the members including the President (then Hughie Scanlon). The committee became a battleground between the traditional right and left machines in the union, the outcome of which was awaited with some



Trade unionism at the sharp end: McLevy, a capable activist and a gifted orator

Photograph: Herald

concern by both Government and employers.

McLevy became the full-time AEU Dundee District Secretary in 1978, and its Scottish Regional Officer in 1984. (The AEU became the AEEU on its amalgamation six years later with the EPTU, the Electrical and Plumbing Trade Union.) In the same year he became a member of the Scottish Trade Union Congress's General Council, becoming its President two years ago. He played a crucial role in the campaign for a Scottish Parliament. McLevy was passionately committed to a Scottish Parliament

long before it was the popular cause that it is today. He was no chauvinist, nor was he xenophobic. He believed that Scotland should remain in a reformed and democratic union as an equal partner.

Harry McLevy had a pawk sense of humour and over a dram or two would entertain his audience for hours. His humour could not hide a deep intelligence. He was also a cultured man, well and widely read, well versed in the radical history of Scotland and its people. McLevy was a kind man, and not vindictive. He detested the Tories for what they had done

to his country and its working people, but he never detested Tories as individuals. He was courteous and considerate to all regardless of politics.

In the early Eighties McLevy left the Communist Party and joined the Labour Party. He did so without rancour. Whilst mellowing, he retained the values of his youth but recognised that the politics of democratic centralism had proved an abysmal failure. He remained on the Left, but he was not critical of Tony Blair's "New Labour" Party, believing that the main objective of the Labour movement was to defeat the

Tories at the coming election, establish a Scottish Parliament and restore democratic rights to workers and their unions, and to forge alliances in order to rebuild Britain and prevent the Tories' return to government.

Over 600 people attended Harry McLevy's funeral service in Dundee last Saturday, from all walks of life and shades of opinion in Scotland.

Jimmy Airlie

Harry McLevy, trade unionist: born Dundee 28 August 1936; twice married (three sons, one daughter); died Dundee 24 December 1995.

Lt-Gen Daniel Graham

Daniel Graham was a career intelligence officer and "ardent hawk" who twice played a major part in shifting the centre of gravity of American national security policy.

The first was in the 1970s when he was a key member of "Team B", the secret intelligence panel convened by President Gerald Ford, which persuaded Washington to take a more pessimistic estimate of Soviet capabilities. The second was when he was perhaps the most persistent advocate in converting the Reagan Administration to the virtues of the Strategic Defence Initiative, widely known as Star Wars.

Graham grew up in a poor farm family in Oregon, and worked in sawmills and orchards as a young man. He won a nomination to West Point and became a career army officer. He served in Germany, Korea and Vietnam, where he worked in intelligence. He was investigated by Congress for reports underestimating the strength of the Vietcong and predicting it would soon run out of troops. He then became convinced that Washington was underestimating the rapid growth in Soviet military expenditure.

In 1973-74 he was deputy director of the Central Intelligence Agency, the civilian agency responsible to the President, and from 1974 to 1976 the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, the military agency responsible to the Secretary for Defense. On his retirement he was one of the moving spirits in a classic Washington bureaucratic manoeuvre with lasting effects on US policy towards the Soviet Union. Its result was that in 1976 the CIA concluded it had greatly underestimated the cost of Soviet weapons production. This estimate did not reflect any growth in Soviet military strength: the Agency had simply increased its estimate of the share of Soviet GNP spent on defence from 6-8 per cent to 13 per cent. "About 90 per cent" of the increase was accounted by the Agency's new estimate of Soviet prices in dollar terms.

President Ford had been persuaded to set up an alternative group of analysts to review the CIA's estimates. "Team B", as it was called, was headed by Richard Pipes, a Harvard Professor of Russian History, but Graham was a dominant intellectual influence in what was in any case a deliberately headline panel.

Team B finished its report in December 1976 and sent it to President-elect Jimmy Carter. It concluded that Soviet capabilities were greater than had been reported in the CIA's intelligence estimates, and that there was little evidence that Moscow shared Washington's faith in "mutual assured destruction", or "MAD", which

had been the central assumption of US policy for many years.

The Team B report was used as the basis for a formidable lobbying effort by Paul H. Nitze and other powerful figures in Washington in support of their conviction that the Soviet Union was embarked on a dangerous new strategic policy. They formed the Committee on the Present Danger, which in 1977 published a report called *What is the Soviet Union Up To?*, warning that the Soviet Union would continue its "expansionist policy" regardless of agreements with Western powers. In this manner Graham's hardline views had a considerable effect on Washington opinion through the late 1970s and 1980s.

As early as 1976 Graham advised Ronald Reagan in his unsuccessful campaign for the presidency. In 1979 Reagan visited North America at Cheyenne Mountain in Colorado and was horrified to dis-



Graham: Star Wars

cover that the US had no defence against Soviet missiles. When he became president in 1981 he set up a secret group in the White House, including Graham and the physicist Edward Teller, "father of the H-Bomb", to shift from defence to offence: move to space, as one of its members noted.

Graham and Teller were convinced that technological innovations had given new life to a concept, rejected by the Eisenhower Administration, for shooting down incoming ballistic missiles in flight. Graham founded a non-profit organisation, High Frontier, to lobby for an American defence system against ballistic missiles, adopted by the Reagan Administration in 1983 as the Strategic Defence Initiative. In later years High Frontier focused more on systems for transport and support in space.

Godfrey Hodgson

Daniel O. Graham, soldier and intelligence officer: born Portland, Oregon 15 April 1925; deputy director, CIA 1973-74; director, DIA 1974-76; married Ruth Maxwell (died 1989); two sons, five daughters; 1994, Adèle Piro; died Arlington, Virginia 31 December 1995.

Stanley Bray

For over 60 years Stanley Bray worked for Sangorski & Sutcliffe, in his time the greatest bookbinding firm in London.

In 1896 two bookbinding apprentices, Francis Sangorski and George Sutcliffe, met at the classes given at the Central School of Arts and Crafts by Douglas Cockerell. Cockerell was then working at the Doves Bindery for T.J. Cobden-Sanderson, whose revolutionary designs inspired the two young men. In 1898 they joined Cockerell when he founded his bindery, and three years later set up on their own. From the start Sangorski & Sutcliffe's work was original in design. They became famous for their elaborate bindings encrusted with gilt work and precious stones. Francis's brother Alberto Sangorski was a more than competent painter and calligrapher, and the firm could execute the inside as well as the outside of the books that bore their name.

Most famous of these books was the copy of the *Rubayyat* of Omar Khayyam that Sangorski designed, which took the bindery two years to complete. With three peacocks in the middle surrounded by vine

sprays, a snake in an apple-tree, roses and poppies, the whole worked in polychrome leather and jewels, it was a masterpiece of its kind. In 1912 it was en route for America in the *Titanic*; and Sangorski was drowned in a bathing accident.

Stanley Bray was born in 1907, and was a child in that year of catastrophe. His uncle George became the sole proprietor of the firm, and his sister's son joined it when he left school, in 1924. He quickly learnt his craft and became his uncle's right-hand man. Nothing, for him, was impossible; nothing too much trouble.

Between the wars was a great time for the firm. It was the era of the Ashendene and Golden Cockerell Presses, many copies of whose work they bound. They also did much work for J. & E. Bumpus, the bookshop in Oxford Street. The manager, J.G. Wilson, was the most influential bookseller in London; he taught his customers to appreciate a well-printed and well-bound book. Many a book with Bumpus's name in it was actually bound by Sangorski & Sutcliffe. A whole wall of such books can now be seen in the

library of Mount Stewart in County Down, originally commissioned by Lord Londonderry for Wynyard Park.

I first climbed up the steep steps that led to the workshop under the roof in Poland Street in the year the Second World War ended. The firm's normal work had been diminished and their skills directed to making essential leather parts for munitions; normal life was only just beginning. Bray's uncle had died in 1943, soon after taking over another bindery in Wood Street, whose manager, Kenneth Hobson, had joined the firm. It was Bray himself who welcomed me, and I can still see his spare, aproned figure, a book in hand and a large roll in the other. Watching him, absorbed, at work was a deep and silent pleasure. Although a responsible proprietor he preferred to work, leaving the detail of management to Hobson. The two worked together in perfect amity.

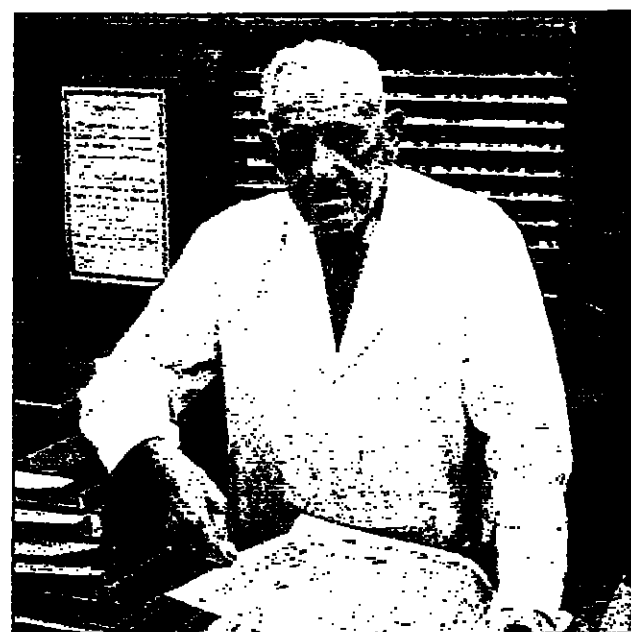
The firm still employed enough skilled craftsmen to undertake complete (if limited) editions for the publisher Rupert Hart-Davis. They did the limited editions of Eric Link-

later's *A Sociable Plover* and *Sealskin Trousers*, with Joan Hassall's lovely wood-engravings. These were to be signed by author and artist, and Linklater, cantankerous after lunch, insisted on signing "Joan Hassall" and making the hapless Joan write "Eric Linklater".

Perhaps most beautiful was their large-paper edition of Andrew Young's *Collected Poems* (1960), also with Joan Hassall's engravings. But there were not enough of these, and the "carriage trade" that Wilson had generated began to wane. Hobson, a little older than Bray, was not well, though he gallantly clambered up the steps till the early 1970s when he retired.

Bray soldiered on until 1978 when, providentially, the firm was taken over by Asprey's, who had become its biggest customer. But Soho rents were rising. Old-style trade binders could no longer survive. Sangorski & Sutcliffe merged with an older firm, Zachsford's, and moved to Bermondsey.

For Bray, this was the signal finally to retire, but not to stop working. In 1932 he had discovered the original designs for the *Rubayyat* lost in 1912, and



Soldiering on: Bray, an old-style trade bookbinder

for seven years worked to recreate a "second Omar". But in 1940, by a strange fatality, the warehouse in the City in which it was stored was blitzed. All that remained was the jewels. Now, 45 years later, Bray set to work to create a third Omar, assisted by his wife, Irene, who had worked with him in the firm for 16 years. He finished in the spring of 1989, and presented

it, with appropriate ceremony, to the British Library where (we may hope) it will this time be preserved. It is a monument to a long life's work.

Nicolas Barker
Arthur Stanley Mardell Bray, bookbinder: born London 25 November 1907; married 1962 Irene Newstead; died Esher, Surrey 24 December 1995.

Melvin Kranzberg

The history of technology is a late-comer to the range of academic disciplines, and Melvin Kranzberg did more than anybody in the Western world to secure its acceptance. This achievement was based on three foundations: first, his enthusiasm and skill as a teacher, which won him generations of admirers amongst students and colleagues; second, his devotion to the creation of a society to advance the study of the subject;

and third, his tireless commitment to the support of causes involved in the history of technology, both at home in the United States and, most outstandingly, through his international affiliations.

Together with others, he formed the Society for the History of Technology (SHOT) in 1955, with himself as founding editor of its quarterly journal, *Technology and Culture*. He held this post until 1984, and

used it to develop a lively international forum for the discussion of all aspects of technological history.

In national affairs, Mel Kranzberg was an adviser to NASA on aspects of the space programme, and for a time advised President Jimmy Carter on science and technology. Internationally, he was associated with the creation of Icohtec, the International Committee for the History of Technology. This

was set up in 1968 at the International Congress for the History of Science and Technology which met that summer in Paris. It was a sensitive moment in international relations, after the "Prague Spring" and the student riots in Paris itself, but it was an act of faith in the importance of maintaining contacts between scholars across the barriers of the Cold War. Most years in this period, members of Icohtec contrived to

meet for a symposium in either East or West Europe. Kranzberg's never-failing enthusiasm, his patient diplomacy and his infectious laughter played an important part in this. He attended virtually every meeting of Icohtec, including the 22nd symposium which was held in Bath in the summer of 1994.

Kranzberg arguably gave too little attention to his own scholarly career. His own thoughts were mainly expressed in edi-

torials and conference papers and have not, as yet, been made available in a substantial form. This is a pity, because he wrote with a pithy topicality about technology and society. Students on both sides of the Atlantic have cause to be grateful for the two-volume textbook which he edited with Carroll Pursell, *Technology in Western Civilization* (1967). And many will recall the memorable, if somewhat gnomic, epigram

which became known to his students as "Kranzberg's First Law": "Technology is neither good nor bad - nor is it neutral."

R. Angus Buchanan

Melvin Kranzberg, historian of technology: born St Louis, Missouri 22 November 1917; Calhoun Professor of the History of Technology, Georgia Institute of Technology 1972-88; married 1984 Louise Lester; died Atlanta, Georgia 6 December 1995.

Madeleine Barot, member of the French Resistance and religious activist, died 28 December, aged 86. In 1940 co-founded CIMADE to promote religious tolerance. Awarded the Légion d'Honneur and Israel's Yad Vashem award for helping Jews escape occupied France.

Palmer Williams, CBS news executive and documentary filmmaker, died 1 January, aged 78. Founding producer of *60 Minutes*, 1968-83. In the Second World War worked for Frank Capra on the Oscar-winning series *Why We Fight*.

Births, Marriages & Deaths

BIRTHS

WALKINGTON: On 25 December 1995, to Sandy Walkington and Francesca West, a girl, Dora Clementine Bianca.

DEATHS

ADAM: David Stuart "Gordon", of Wendenburg, Bucks, suddenly, 27 December 1995, in Mürren, Switzerland, aged 68 years. Beloved husband of Rosemary and father of Jamie, Alexander and Alexander. Funeral service, St Mary's Church, Wendenburg, Wednesday 10 January 1996, 12 noon, followed by burial. Flowers or donations if desired for Help the Aged Bucklebury, c/o K.Y. Green, Funeral Directors, telephone 01296 82041.

de VRIES: Sonya, greatly beloved mother of Bea, Mandy, Alexander, Philip and Claire, at home after an illness fought with great courage and dignity on 4 January 1996. Requiem Mass at St Mary Magdalene, East Hill, London SW18, on Tuesday 16 January at 11am. Family flowers only donations, if desired, to Imperial Cancer Research Fund.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS should be sent in writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL, telephone 0171-293 2011 (24-hour answering machine 0171-293 2012) or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Changing the Guard

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment mounts the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, 11am.

Birthdays

King Juan Carlos of Spain, 58; Jean Grand Duke of Luxembourg, 75; Mr Mansur Ali Khan, Nawab of Pataudi, cricketer, 55; Mr Jean-Pierre Aumont, actor, 85; Mr Alfred Brendel, concert pianist, 65; Mrs Jean Clark, President, National Council of Women of Great Britain, 61; Mr John Darby, former chairman, Ulster, 66; Mr Terry Davis MP, 58; Mr Robert Duval, actor, 65; Sir Frank Hartley, former Vice-Chancellor, London University, 85; Sir Alan Hume, former chairman, Ancient Monuments Board, Scotland, 83; Miss Diane Keaton, actress, 50; Lord Kingsdown, former Governor of the Bank of England, and Lord-Lieutenant of Kent, 69; Miss Jan Leeming, broadcaster, 54; Miss Sarah Lucas, radio presenter, 45; Mr Maurizio Pollini, pianist, 54; Maj-Gen Henry Quinlan, former Director of the Army Dental Service, 90; Lt-Gen Sir Michael Rose, UN commander in Bosnia, 56; General Sir John Subban, Chief Royal Engineer, 61.

Anniversaries

Births: Dr Benjamin Rush, politician, 1745; Jean-Baptiste Say, political economist, 1767; Stephen Decatur, naval commander, 1779; John Burke, genealogist, founder of *Burke's Peerage*, 1787; Thomas Pringle, poet, 1789; Thomas Crueswick, painter, 1811; William Smith Rockstro (Rock), organist and composer, 1823; Karlota Bötter, poet and revolutionary, 1848; King Camille Gillette, inventor of the safety-razor, 1855; Sir William Newnam Prior Nicholson, painter and engraver, 1872; Joseph Erlanger, neuro-physiologist, 1874; Konrad Adenauer, statesman, 1876; Humbert Wolfe, poet, 1885; Clifford Grey, actor, author and lyricist, 1887; Stella Dorothea Gibbons (Mrs Allan

Bourne Webb), poet and novelist, 1902; Kathleen Mary Kenyon, archaeologist, 1906; Jack Lovelock, athlete and surgeon, 1910. Deaths: St Edward the Confessor, 1066; Giambattista Moroni, portrait painter, 1578; Catherine de Medici, Queen of France, 1589; Antonio Lotti, organist and composer, 1740; Isaac Reed, Shakespearean scholar and editor, 1807; Empress Elizabeth Petrovna of Russia, 1762; Sir George Prevost, soldier and statesman, 1816; Sir William Hillary, founder of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, 1847; Joseph Gillott, steel pen manufacturer, 1873; Anton Mauve, landscape painter, 1888; John Westland Marston, poet, 1890; Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton, explorer, 1922; John Calvin Coolidge, 30th US president, 1933; Humbert Wolfe, poet, 1940; Amy Johnson (Mollison), aviator, 1941; George Washington Currier, scientist, 1943; Roberto Gerhard, composer, 1970; Brian Alexander Johnston, broadcaster and cricket commentator, 1994. On this day: Charles the Bold of France was killed by the Swiss at the Battle of Nancy, 1477; Britain and Turkey concluded the Treaty of the Dardanelles, 1809; John Thurtell and Joseph Hunt were tried for the murder of fellow-swindler William Weare, Hunt turning King's evidence, 1824; Gilbert and Sullivan's opera *Princess Ida* was first performed, London 1884; the first demonstration of X-rays was given by Röntgen, 1896; the Kingdom of Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia (Yugoslavia) was established, 1919; in the United States, the first woman governor, Mrs Nellie Taylor Ross, was elected, 1925; King Alexander of Yugoslavia established himself as a dictator, 1929; FM radio was first demonstrated in the United States by Major Edwin H. Armstrong, 1940; Pope Paul VI and Patriarch

Athenagoras I met in Jerusalem, the first meeting between leaders of the Roman Catholic and Orthodox churches for over 500 years, 1964; President Giscard d'Estaing promulgated a law making the use of French compulsory in advertising, and instructions on consumer and other goods, 1976. Today is Wassail Eve (tonight is Twelfth Night) and the Feast Day of St Apollinaris, St Convoyn, St Dorothea the Younger, St Gerlac, St John Nepomucene Neumann, St Simeon Stylites and St Syncretics.

Lectures

National Gallery: Alexander Sturgis, "Looking Forward (I): Hals, *Young Man Holding a Skull*", 1pm. British Museum: George Hart, "The Lure of Lebanon: Byblos and the cedars", 1.15pm.

Billy Marsh

A memorial service of celebration and thanksgiving for the life of Billy Marsh (1917-1995) will be held at St James's Church, Piccadilly, London W1, on Monday 5 February at 11am. Donations will be welcomed in his memory at Marie Curie Cancer Care at 28 Belgrave Square, London SW1X 8QG.

Synagogue services

Details of synagogue services to be held tomorrow may be obtained by telephoning the following. Sabbath begins in London at 3.25pm. United Synagogue: 0171-387 4300. Federation of Synagogues: 0181-262 2263. Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues: 0171-280 1663. Reform Synagogue of Great Britain: 0181-349 4701. Spanish and Portuguese Jews Congregation: 0171-289 2573. New London Synagogue (Masorti): 0171-328 1026.

Mortgage repossession may be deferred

LAW REPORT

5 January 1996

National & Provincial Building Society v Lloyd's Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Neill, Mr Justice Bennett); 6 December 1995

The court could defer the grant of possession of mortgaged property to the lender where there was clear evidence that the defaulting borrower would be able to complete a proposed sale of the property within a specified period, even if that might take a year. There was no rule restricting such deferment to a much shorter period.

The Court of Appeal so ruled when allowing an appeal by the plaintiff, National & Provincial Building Society, against the decision by Her Honour Judge McKinney, sitting in Bournemouth County Court on 15 May 1995, to suspend an order for possession, which the deputy district judge had granted to the society on 28 March 1995, and to allow the defendant, Geoffrey William Lloyd, until June 1996 to complete proposed sales of mortgaged properties.

Alli Malek (Dih Lupton Brookhead, Leeds) for the building society; Patrick Hamlin (Heald Nickinson, Camberley) for the borrower.

Lord Justice Neill said that by a mortgage dated 25 June 1992 the defendant had borrowed £280,000 on a 25-year term

(interest-only) loan charged on two properties, a farm in Cardigan and premises in Wareham, Dorset. He soon fell into arrears with the monthly interest payments and in 1994 the society brought possession proceedings, claiming £335,000 including principal.

In March 1995 the defendant swore an affidavit in which he referred to sales of parts of the farm land and an offer for the Wareham property which, on completion, would realise £199,250 to reduce the mortgage debt. In a further affidavit, sworn the day of the appeal hearing before Judge McKinney, he referred to other expected sales and an offer which was expected to reach completion in June 1996.

The judge held that the suspension of the possession order, under section 36 of the Administration of Justice Act 1973, had not been fully considered before the district judge, and that this was a case to which it applied.

She concluded that "there are provisions which could result, not on an idle or fanciful

basis, but on a firm basis - not contractual but firm - for raising considerable sums of money"; that it was in the society's interests "that the best price be obtained"; and that the defendant's liabilities could be met if the possession order were suspended.

The society argued that such deferment should only be ordered where the prospects of an early sale were best served by allowing a mortgagee time and, furthermore, that any such deferment should be short.

It was true that the authorities, both at common law and in cases on section 36 of the 1970 Act, had suggested that any suspension or adjournment to enable a sale would only be allowed if a sale would take place within a short period of time (see, in particular, *Royal Trust Co of Canada v Markham* [1975] 1 WLR 1416 per Sir John Pennycuik); but his Lordship did not understand there to be a rigid rule of law to this effect.

If there were clear evidence that the completion of the sale of a property, perhaps by piecemeal disposal, could take place in six or nine months or even

a year, there was no reason why a court could not conclude in the exercise of its discretion that, in the words of section 36, "the mortgage is likely to be able within a reasonable period to pay any sums due under the mortgage". The question of a "reasonable period" would be a question for the court in the individual case.

In this case, however, his Lordship agreed with the society that the evidence adduced on the defendant's behalf was insufficient to entitle the judge to make the suspension order. Much of it was a mere expression of hope.

In this class of case, where the mortgaged property was to be sold and there were no known outside assets, the question was whether it was likely that the mortgagee would be able to pay the sums due under the mortgage, including the capital sum, within a reasonable period.

With the greatest respect to the judge, his Lordship concluded that the evidence available to her did not establish that this was so. In these circumstances, the appeal must be allowed and the suspension order revoked.

Mr Justice Bennett agreed.

Paul Magrath, Barrister

Algerian rebels mark Ramadan in blood

ROBERT FISK
Middle East Correspondent

Is Algeria about to suffer another bloody Ramadan? Each year, the armed Islamist opposition promises a holy month of slaughter, and already this week a massive car bomb has exploded in the provincial city of Blida, 32 miles south of Algiers, killing five civilians and wounding 30 others. All the dead were residents of a businessman's hotel; two of the wounded were 18-month-old babies. And Ramadan is three days away.

Last week, too, saw a suicide bomb attack against the city hall at Larbaaatech, 20 miles from the capital, which killed the bomber—who was driving a lorry packed with explosives—and a civilian. Car- and truck-bombs have now become a signature of the Islamic Armed Group (GIA) which has been at war with the Algerian government since the suspension of parliamentary elections just over four years ago. On 12 December, one of the most devastating attacks—a car-bomb explosion in the Algiers suburb of Ain Naadja—killed another 15 civilians.

The purpose behind the bombings is clear: to destroy the hopes of millions of Algerians who voted in last November's presidential elections in the

belief that a democratic poll, albeit without the participation of the banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), would somehow bring an end to violence. President Liamine Zeroual, the ex-general originally appointed by a military-backed committee, gained almost 61 per cent of the votes in an election which appeared remarkably fair. On the day of his victory, he gave the impression that he intended to form a coalition government that would represent, in his own words, "all Algerians".

What has emerged, however, has fallen somewhat short of that aspiration. True, Ahmed Merani, a founder member of the FIS, was made minister of religious affairs. But Mr Merani left the party long ago. Bougara Soltani, a member of Sheikh Mahfoud Nahnah's Hamas party, which won around 25 per cent of the votes in the presidential election, has been made minister for small and medium industries. But Mr Soltani has no control over radical Islamists; less than two years ago, he was seriously wounded by GIA gunmen who killed one of his Hamas colleagues in the same attack.

Other ministers were formerly associated with President Zeroual; the new prime minister, for example, is his former *chef de cabinet*, and another junior minister was Zeroual's



Lonely road: A young Algerian shepherd guards his sheep next to a masked member of the government's paramilitary gendarmes. Photograph: AP

spokesman during the November elections.

Nevertheless, Mr Zeroual has had the satisfaction of observing some bloody divisions among his enemies. When an FIS spokesman in Germany proposed opening a dialogue

with the new government, he was bitterly condemned by a colleague in Washington. And the GIA itself has admitted murdering two of its senior members, Mohamed Said and Abdelrezak Redjam, because they objected to the campaign

of throat-cutting and beheading which has terrorised hundreds of towns and villages across Algeria. The GIA leader, Djamel Zitouni, accused the two men of "planning to destabilise the group and of dividing the *mujahedin* [fighters]".

Mr Zitouni has also called on his followers to fight their former colleagues in the less savage of the Algerian armed groups, the Islamic Salvation Army (ISA) for their alleged "corruption on earth"—fundamentalist-speak for saying that

the ISA is beginning to doubt the wisdom of a war that has now claimed the lives of at least 50,000 Algerians.

Aware that the opposition is fracturing, President Zeroual in December closed down the harsh desert prison camp in



President Zeroual: Vowed to represent 'all Algerians'

southern Algeria where hundreds of Islamists were held without trial. But, weeks later, GIA men assassinated the head of the Algerian coastguard and a senior army officer in Algiers.

In the mountains, meanwhile, a ruthless guerrilla war continues with few witnesses and even less information divulged by the government. In the last week of December alone, a pro-government daily newspaper in Algiers reported 100 Islamists shot dead by troops and paramilitary police at Ouled Slama. On 3 January, six more armed Muslims were reported killed in gun battles in Algiers. No wonder, then, that Algerians are fearful that a bloody Ramadan may usher in a new and more terrible year.

Israeli settlers see their world crumble

PATRICK COCKBURN
Hebron

"On all sides we will be surrounded by armed Palestinians, so there is a sense of abandonment," says David Wilder, one of the leaders of 500 Jewish settlers in Hebron.

As Palestinians hold their first election on Saturday, the most militant of the Israeli settlers see their world crumbling, but fear there is little they can do about it. The Israeli army in Hebron will redeploy in March, turning the rest of the city over to Palestinian control. Danny Hitzny, a deeply religious settler, says: "Rabin's assassination stopped the protests by our people." He laments that leaders of the right do nothing because they fear being accused of involvement in the murder of Yitzhak Rabin. He says: "The government has given six or seven cities to the Arabs in three weeks, which is terrible."

There is not a lot the settlers can do to halt the process. On Saturday they will rally in Zion

Square in west Jerusalem to protest against Palestinians in the city being allowed to vote, on the grounds that this threatens Israeli sovereignty. In theory they could cause trouble in Palestinian east Jerusalem by swapping the post offices being used as polling stations, but the Hebron settlers said they did not plan to disrupt the election.

An incident overnight just north of Hebron provided the only real chance of halting the Israeli army withdrawal—gunmen in a blue Mercedes fired automatic weapons into a car carrying two Israeli officers, killing both of them.

The attack ended a period of several months when there have been very few Israelis killed by Palestinians. The Israeli security services had been expecting an attack, but assumed it would probably be by a suicide bomber in revenge for the killing of Yahya Ayyash, the Palestinian bomb maker, in Gaza two weeks ago. The shooting of the soldiers may not be direct retaliation but it seems to be

part of an upsurge of violence since Ayyash died.

David Wilder, not a man given to exaggerating the pacific intentions of his Palestinian neighbours, says: "I am sure that most of the Arabs don't like the killings last night—because they know that it might delay the withdrawal." This is probably correct. The attack might also be a protest against the election, but a poll by a Palestinian organisation yesterday predicted a 80 per cent turnout by one million voters.

Fears among settlers about the future of Jerusalem may also be realised. Ehud Olmert, the right-wing mayor of the city, says Israelis and Palestinians have held talks in Europe about its permanent status, though official negotiations only start in May. Yossi Beilin, a minister close to Shimon Peres, the Prime Minister, said that Israel must hold talks with the Palestinians on the issue. That would only happen if Israel met the Palestinian demand also to have a capital in Jerusalem.

Saddam denounces foes as 'hyenas'

LEON BARKHO
Reuters

Baghdad — On the fifth anniversary of the Gulf war which drove Iraq out of Kuwait, President Saddam Hussein has hit out at the "howls of hyenas" from Iraq's critics.

In an address to the nation yesterday, Saddam proclaimed the "Mother of All Battles" and said that Iraq, not the US-led multinational coalition, had won the six-week war which began on 17 January 1991.

"The crows, jackals and hyenas around it... thought that Iraq, a nation of faith and jihad [holy struggle], was on its way to fall, so they increased their howl," he said. "The Iraqis defeated the enemy by preventing them from throttling the base of the capability of the faithful [Arab] nation and centre of its radiation [Iraq]." Saddam said in the 90-minute speech on Baghdad television.

But he admitted that his country suffered a great deal from the war and the prolonged sanctions—"a painful and vicious embargo"—imposed on Iraq as punishment for invading Kuwait in 1990.

Saddam said that those demanding a change in Iraqi government despite his overwhelming victory in a presidential referendum last October were following "the path of subservience to the [unnamed] foreigner". He said: "The foreigner gestured to them to embark on what you hear... They are lowly obedient servants, utterly humiliated, and shall not stop until the foreigner is frustrated."

King Hussein of Jordan, who backed Saddam in the Gulf crisis, has called for a change of government in Baghdad after giving asylum to two senior Iraqi defectors and their wives—both daughters of Saddam—last August.

Saddam, however, said he was ready to turn a new page in his relations with the Arab states hostile to his leadership, saying he was ready to solve outstanding issues which he described as "minor".

Pretoria inquiry confirms secret battle to save rhinos

FOREIGN STAFF
AND AGENCIES

The World Wide Fund for Nature ran a covert operation in southern Africa aimed at stamping out illegal trade in rhino horn, a South African judicial commission reported yesterday. The report confirms an article that appeared in the *Independent* in January 1991.

The commission, headed by Judge Mark Kumble, was appointed by President Nelson Mandela to investigate the smuggling of ivory and rhino horn from southern African countries through South Africa.

The report cited evidence that the operation—codenamed Project Lock—was the brainchild of Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, first president of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) then known as the World Wildlife Fund.

Prince paid thousands

The World Wide Fund for Nature is mounting a secret project to fight rhino poaching, which collapsed with funds and horn stocks missing. Stephen Ellis documents the scandal.

From The Independent of 8 January 1991

KAS International, a private company formed by David Stirling, founder of the SAS, produced a feasibility study and was then appointed to undertake the task, the report said.

"The operation was aimed at all parts of southern and central Africa where the survival of rhino was threatened by poaching and smuggling."

A WWF document handed in to the commission indicated that

the covert unit operated in Zimbabwe, Zambia, Namibia and other southern African countries against smugglers. South African police told the commission that the unit stopped its operations in mid-1990. The report said that South Africa's army was involved in the large-scale destruction of wildlife and smuggling in Angola and Namibia for more than a decade.

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For a cricket lover:

The *Village Cricket Tour* will give hours of pleasure. A novel which describes the adventures and mishaps of a team of amateur cricketers who spend two weeks of their summer holidays on a cricket tour of the West Country and which has been compared to Jerome K Jerome's classic *Three Men in a Boat*. "I enjoyed it immensely," wrote Peter Tinniswood in *Punch*. "He has succeeded in writing a book that will entertain, a book that will amuse and warm the cockles of tired hearts." "Coleman is a very funny writer," said *This England*. "It would be a pity if cricketers were the only people to read this book." "Seminal reading includes de Selincourt and Blunden and should now embrace Vernon Coleman's latest offering, a whimsical piece about the peregrinations of a village cricket team on its summer tour," said *The Cricketer* magazine. "All the characters are here, woven together by a raft of anecdotes and reminiscences and a travelogue of some of the most picturesque spots in the south west." A marvellous present for all cricket lovers.

For a golf lover:

Anyone who likes golf will love *The Man Who Inherited a Golf Course*. This superb novel tells the story of Trevor Dukinfield who wakes up one morning to find that he is the owner of his very own golf club—fairways, bunkers, clubhouse and all. There's one snag: to keep the club he must win a golf match. And he's never played a round of golf in his life. "The scenario is tailor made for Vernon Coleman's light and amusing anecdotes about country life and pursuits," said the *Sunday Independent*. "Very readable!" said *Golf World*. "Hugely enjoyable in the best tradition of British comic writing," said the *Evening Chronicle*. "The mix of anecdotes and moments of sheer farce make for an absorbing read," said the *Evening Telegraph*. A terrific present for anyone who enjoys golf. Far more fun than another pair of socks or a bottle of aftershave.

For a cat lover:

Feline fans will love *Alice's Diary* which tells of a year in the life of a mixed tabby cat. Alice shows us, with great humour and insight, what it is really like to be a cat. Our files are bursting with letters from readers who love this book. "What a wonderful book, so beautifully written, it was a great pleasure to read," wrote Mrs Y of Essex. "Please send copies of *Alice's Diary* to the eleven friends on the accompanying list. It is a wonderful book which will give them all great pleasure," wrote Mr R of Lancashire. *Alice's Diary* is delightfully illustrated throughout. But we warn you: when you see it you may not want to give it away! An absolute must for all cat and animal lovers. Guaranteed to give more joy and laughter than almost any other present you can choose.

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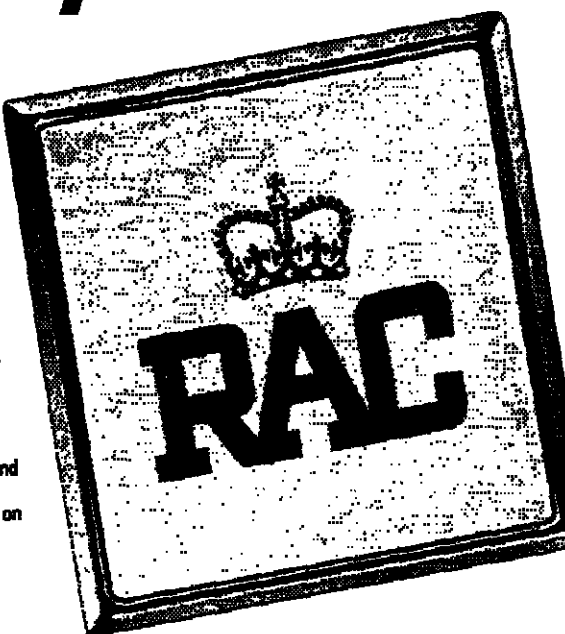
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obituaries/gazette

Professor R. P. Bell

R. P. Bell was one of Britain's most distinguished physical chemists and a great Balliol man. He served Balliol College, Oxford, as Tutor for Admissions, Senior Tutor and Vice-Master, and in 1967, after 34 years as a Fellow, was elected to an Honorary Fellowship.

As a tutor he had some idiosyncratic ideas. The first term of physical chemistry tutorials was simply appalling. Each student was made to copy out a series of Victorian papers by T.W. Richards on the accurate determination of the atomic weight of silver. This exercise was so stupefyingly boring that people either changed to PPE or else demonstrated that they had the endurance to make a success of the chemistry course. Once one progressed to Bell's own field of reaction kinetics, he was an excellent tutor. He had a formidable intellect, of cool clarity and ruthless objectivity.

Bell was a small man with rather large ears and a delightful twinkle in his eye. Perched on his chair he would peruse the weekly essay with a slim gold propelling pencil, pouncing on spelling mistakes, mathematical non-sequiturs or errors in logic. There was a quiet and deadly courtesy: "I do not quite understand..." (In this sentence one realised that the first person singular should be replaced by the second.) As a tutor or supervisor he treated his pupils as equals. With Hugh Longuet-Higgins, he famously wrote a paper on the structure of borane which arose from a third year tutorial.

Bell's great contribution to science was the study of proton transfer reactions and the elucidation of the nature of acids and bases in solution. Proton

transfer reactions are ubiquitous; for instance most biochemical transformations involve proton transfers, since organic molecules always have a skin of hydrogen atoms.

His work combined high-powered theory with ingenious and innovative experimentation. On the theoretical side he was one of the first in 1933 to use quantum theory to predict that when a proton reacts it might tunnel through the energy barrier rather than go over the top. He also pioneered studies in which a hydrogen atom is replaced with the heavier isotope deuterium. The consequent change in the rate of reaction gives unique and detailed understanding of the route by which the reaction takes place.

Examples of Bell's experimental ingenuity would include the early use of a tape recorder to record data on a faster timescale, the study of rates of reaction using small home-made thermocouples to measure the heat emitted by the reaction and the study of fast brominations using platinum electrodes to measure very low concentrations of bromine.

In 1954 the Faraday Society held an important discussion meeting on the study of fast reactions. On the first day Bell described his new tape-recording techniques which could measure rates of reaction that took only 10^{-3} seconds. Manfred Eigen rightly won the Nobel Prize for Chemistry in 1967 for developing techniques to measure rapid chemical reactions, and it was perhaps Bell's misfortune not to have made a single great advance but rather to have contributed a lifetime of theory and associated experiments.

Ronald Percy Bell was born in 1907 and in 1924 arrived at

Balliol College as an Exhibitioner to read for a chemistry degree under the redoubtable Sir Harold Hartley. In 1928 he won the Gibbs Prize awarded to the best chemist in Finals and he wrote to Hartley, "May it long continue to be a Balliol perquisite."

In the years that Bell was a Fellow, from 1933 to 1967, his early wish was largely fulfilled. Between 1928 and 1932 he worked in Copenhagen with the great Danish physical chemist J.N. Brønsted. A rumour arose that Bell had fallen in with a troupe of somewhat disreputable actors, so much so that one morning he found a note from Brønsted on his apparatus saying that since Mr Bell had not been seen for three months Brønsted assumed he had returned to England. Brønsted cannot have been too displeased because he wrote to Hartley: "It gives me great pleasure to state that Mr Bell has showed himself as an unusually bright and able young man." Bell returned to succeed Hartley as Bedford Lecturer in Chemistry at Balliol in 1932 without completing a doctorate; throughout most of his working life he gloried in being simply Mr Bell.

His work was recognised by many honours. In 1944 he was elected to the Royal Society and served on its council. In 1972 he became a foreign associate of the National Academy in the United States. He served as President of the Faraday Society in 1956 and as a Vice-President of the Royal Society of Chemistry in 1958.

Ronnie Bell did not care about rank and was utterly without pomposity. But as well as the cool dispassionate man of reason there was also a warm

appreciation of the good things of life. He loved music and was a keen supporter of the Balliol choir. He smoked Havana cigars and therefore his laboratory had a far more satisfying aroma than usual. He delighted in his cottage on Buttermer, in the Lake District. All these qualities meant that he was a strong candidate for the Mastership of Balliol in the election that took place in 1964, but in the end the Fellows preferred Christopher Hill.

In 1967 Bell was persuaded to be the first Professor of Chemistry at Stirling University. He presided over the design and construction of a most elegant laboratory and served on the University Council and on the Academic Council. He retired in 1975 but continued to take an interest in protons and



Bell: 'I do not quite understand...' Photograph: Godfrey Argent

Kaye Webb



Webb: 'Puffin-ness'

Readers of fortysomething who were founder members of the Puffin Club formed an illustrious throng around Kaye Webb at the celebrations of Puffin Books' 50th anniversary in 1991. They were still thanking Webb who, as Publisher of Puffin Children's Books and, particularly, through the medium of the Puffin Club, had given them and many others as children fresh access to reading. Her enthusiasm and drive made children's books matter at a time when they were not part of "education" but very much the preserve of librarians, parents and children themselves.

Kaye Webb was in almost all respects a larger-than-life character. She was openly and easily emotional but at heart enormously shrewd, backing successful hunches about both people and books; she was entertaining, for example in telling stories of her "fast" past - two husbands before she married the artist Ronald Searle; exacting to work for, demanding huge personal loyalty in equal measure to professional commitment; generous and absolutely tireless. Even when in great pain from the arthritis which dogged so much of her life, Webb would insist on joining in whatever was happening, being wheeled around by a raft of devoted followers.

Her passion for pink, wearing it herself and eagerly followed by her staff in doing so in order to promote "Puffin-ness" at the amazing Puffin Exhibitions, and her desire to make sure that Puffins touched every aspect of a child's life (Puffin holidays, the Puffin song, the Puffin drink), became almost obsessive and, yet, it did serve the purpose she intended. Children and parents loved Puffins.

Webb was perfectly shrewd in this. She recognised that marketing children's books was just as important as having the right books in the first place.

Kaye Webb came to Puffin as

other companies. Rights reverted. Puffin lost some of its most famous names, including most bitterly for Webb the Narnia stories, but with the help of her long-serving and devoted editors, she bought in some of the bright new names of the future. She began to take more risks, which gave the list a fresher feeling entirely fitting with the fast-changing times of the late 1960s and early 1970s. The publication of Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* in 1973 showed how she had remained perceptive about the tastes of children.

Kaye Webb had a child-like enthusiasm and sense of fun herself and she wanted children to share it. She recognised the moral responsibility that children's books carry but her prime concern was that children should, in the widest sense, be entertained by books.

Her influence on children's reading was colossal. It was felt well beyond Puffin in Penguin, where she was a director, and in the world of children's books, where she was a contributor to the Children's Book Circle, the Federation of Children's Book Groups and the School Bookshop Association. She never lost her enthusiasm for books, authors or children and she went on sharing it.

Julia Eccleshare

Kaye Webb, writer and editor: born 26 January 1914, Assistant Editor, Lilliput 1941-47; theatre correspondent, the Leader 1947-49; features writer, News Chronicle 1949-55; Editor, the Elizabethan 1955-58; Children's Editor, Puffin Books and Publishing Director, Children's Dishing Director, Children's Dishing 1961-79; Editor, Puffin Post 1967-89; MBE 1974; Founder, Puffin Club 1967; married first Christopher Brierley (marriage dissolved), secondly Andrew Hunter (marriage dissolved), thirdly 1946 Ronald Searle (one son, one daughter; marriage dissolved 1967); died 16 January 1996.

Professor Sir Edmund Happold

Ted Happold was an unusual figure in the construction world: an engineer's architect and an architect's engineer. "A world which sees art and engineering as divided is not seeing the world as a whole," he wrote.

His world-wide reputation stems from his creative and humane approach to structural design and his intimate involvement with the development of the new structural principles of celebrated modern buildings including the Pompidou Centre, Paris (with Richard Rogers, Renzo Piano and two others he won the competition to design it in 1971), the Salisbury Extension of Worcester College, Oxford (with the architects MacCormac Jameson and Pritchard), the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield (with Renzo Piano and two others he won the competition to design it in 1971), the Salisbury Extension of Worcester College, Oxford (with the architects MacCormac Jameson and Pritchard), the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield (with Renzo Piano and two others he won the competition to design it in 1971), the Salisbury Extension of Worcester College, Oxford (with the architects MacCormac Jameson and Pritchard), the Crucible Theatre, Sheffield (with Renzo Piano and two others he won the competition to design it in 1971).

Born and educated in Leeds, Happold began his professional career working for a short time for the celebrated Finnish architect Alvar Aalto. Afterwards he joined Ove Arup and Partners in 1956 when the structural work for Basil Spence's Coventry Cathedral and John Utzon's Sydney Opera House was on the go in their London office.

In 1958 he left Arup's for the United States, where he spent two years with the New York consultants Severud, Elstad and Kruger, and was particularly influenced by Eero Saarinen's organically curved, tensile-roofed David S. Ingalls Ice Hockey Stadium at Yale, which he worked on. He returned to London and to Arup's in 1961 where he headed the radical unit known as "Structures 3" until 1976. That year he founded Buro Happold, Bath, a practice that today has a staff of 300, and several other offices in Britain and abroad. The New York office is currently completing lightweight structures for the Atlanta Olympics, while the British offices are working with Sir Norman Foster on the Faisal Foundation Complex in Riyadh.

During Happold's time at Arup's an impressive portfolio of structural engineering work was built up in which he became actively involved with the design teams from Sir Basil Spence's office (then working on Sussex University and Knightsbridge Barracks), and with Ted Holmby and Lambeth Borough Council (on Central Hill Housing). He worked on a conference centre in Riyadh with Trevor Dannatt (1966), and on another (with a hotel) using lightweight tensile structures at Mecca (also 1966) with Rolf Gutbrod and Frei Otto that won a major Aga Khan Award. Happold often spoke of the



Happold: a man with ideas

debt he owed to Professor James Gordon of Reading University and his analysis of the biological and organic nature of structure and to his close friendship with Frei Otto, who further stimulated his interest in lightweight tensile structures. His remark of Otto, "He never stops learning and thinking, and the results of that transcend fashion", could as easily be applied to Happold himself.

The work with Gutbrod and Otto included the highly regarded Diplomatic Club, Riyadh (1986) that fused modern construction techniques with a traditional tented exterior and high protecting walls as well as the lightweight long-span Sports Hall for King Abdul Aziz at Jeddah (1977) and the sensuously shaped Mannheim Garden Show Pavilions (1975).

With Otto and Richard Burton of ABK (Ahrend Burton Koralek) he also contributed to an experiment in the use of green timbers for structural purposes at John Makepeace's Furniture Training School, at Hooke Park, Dorset.

He made three important engineering innovations: the "umbrella" at Mecca, fan-shaped, hanging roof forms stabilised by the dead weight of cladding and insulation; the two layers of grid shells (themselves designed by Otto) in the Mannheim pavilions, used to give them strength against buckling; and, at the Munich Aviary, stainless-steel woven metal introduced to produce a free-shape organic support to bear the weight of snow.

From 1976, when he became Professor of Building Engineering, and occasional Head of the School of Architecture and Engineering, at Bath University, Happold's enthusiasms were brought into focus for two new generations of students from both disciplines. He contributed to the new and sympathetic understanding - and synthesis of ideas - so clearly observable between architects and engineers over the past few years through his involvement in numerous bodies: on boards, working groups, committees and juries, including acting as the first chairman of the influential Construction Industry Council. He brought together representatives of many persuasions with

in the construction industry in a non-adversarial manner, in line with his own Quaker background.

Ted Happold was a man with ideas, a stimulating ability to convey them and to solve problems. Who could forget the lengthy and often incredibly funny descriptions he would give of a problem recently solved, or his infectious enthusiasm for finding alternative solutions to other seemingly intractable problems? He dealt as capably with business matters as with theoretical and creative questions. Recently he came up with a sensible cost proposal in less than 24 hours on a rather complicated job my office was about to undertake - chiding me, "Give me a bit longer next time."

Dennis Sharp

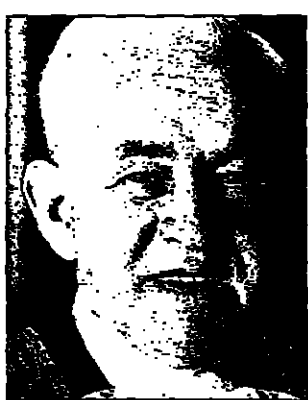
Edmund Happold, engineer: born Leeds 8 November 1930; Senior Engineer, then Associate, later Executive Partner, Ove Arup & Partners 1960-76; Senior Partner, Buro Happold 1976-96; Professor of Building Engineering, Bath University 1976-96; Vice-President, Institute of Structural Engineers 1982-86; Gold Medalist 1992; RDI 1983; FEng 1983; Chairman, Construction Industry Council 1988-91; Vice-President, Royal Society of Arts 1991-96; Senior Fellow, Royal College of Art 1993; Kt 1994; married 1967 Evelyn Matthews (two sons); died Bath 12 January 1996.

Philip Dunleavy

The development of Cardiff as a major Western European city owes much to Philip Dunleavy.

He was elected to the City Council in 1962 - barely seven years after Cardiff was officially designated the capital of Wales. Much needed to be done to restore the fortunes of the once great port. Cardiff suffered its share of air-raids during the Second World War: one attack on 2 January 1941 killed 165 and raised parts of the city. The run-down of coal exports made things worse. By 1993 when Dunleavy was awarded the Freedom of Cardiff a transformation had taken place and the seal was set on his lifelong commitment to public service.

Born in Cardiff, he joined the Post Office in 1930 at the age of 14. Apart from war service as a military policeman he remained there until retiring as an executive officer in 1975.



Dunleavy: politics in Cardiff

He became leader of the city council in 1974, a particularly challenging period due to extensive local government reorganisation. He held the post until 1976, returning for a second spell as leader from 1979 to 1982. He also served as an elected member of South Glamorgan County Council from 1974 to 1981.

A long-serving member of the Labour Party, Dunleavy was unsparing in his efforts to move Cardiff into the league of successful cities where commerce, culture and the people's well-being blend successfully. People came first. Long before it was fashionable he campaigned for the release of land in the old docks area for housing. He was a champion of St David's Hall - a city-centre building combining a concert hall, restaurants, space for art exhibitions and commercial promotions. For many years the city centre was congested, a circumstance not helped by a network of trams. Under the eye of the City Fathers streets were pedestrianised and tree-planting and signage schemes started.

The preservation and improvement of Cardiff Castle in the heart of the city owes much to Dunleavy's enthusiasm. He called in craftsmen to carry out restoration work of the building, which stands in Bute Park, named after the first Marquess of Bute who at the end of the 18th century began revitalising the castle. In 1948 the fifth

marquess gave the castle and its grounds to the council, which uses it for civic functions, receptions and trade promotions. The National Ice Rink, home of the Cardiff Devils, one of Britain's leading ice hockey teams, also benefited from his persuasive lobbying.

Philip Dunleavy was Lord Mayor of Cardiff from 1982 to 1983, and then retired from local government service. His devotion to helping those in need continued, with youth clubs, housing associations and the Citizen's Advice Bureau being among those to benefit.

He leaves behind a legacy some consider as important as his contribution to civic affairs - the encouragement of new generations of Labour politicians in Wales's capital. Alun Michael, MP for Cardiff South and Penarth and an opposition home affairs spokesman, who served alongside Dunleavy as a city councillor, described him as "an inspiration". "He towered over Cardiff's political landscape," he said.

Tony Heath

Philip Dunleavy, local politician: born Cardiff 5 October 1915; member, Cardiff City Council 1962-83; Leader 1974-76, 1979-82; member, South Glamorgan County Council 1974-81; OBE 1978, CBE 1983; Lord Mayor of Cardiff 1982-83; married 1936 Valerie Partridge (two sons, two daughters); died Cardiff 13 January 1996.

BIRTHS

ASKWITH: On 13 January 1996, to Clare (née Crowley) and Richard, a son, Edward Mark Brodie. A brother for Isabel.

DEATHS

FELLOWS: Harold Alwyn, of Springfield (Ipswich and formerly of Felsed, on 14 January 1996, suddenly and peacefully, whilst on holiday. Husband of the late Doreen and of Margaret. Father of William, David, Nicholas and Andrew. A much-loved and devoted husband, father, stepfather and grandfather, who will be sadly missed. Funeral arrangements to be announced later.

MEWENNEY: Terence, KCMS MB BCh BAO (NU) MCs MCh (Oth) FRCS FACS. Formerly Director of Spinal Injuries Unit, Orthopaedic Hospital, Queensway, and Orthopaedic Surgeon, Leighton Hospital, Crewe. Died peacefully on 14 January 1996. Funeral service at St Mary's Parish Church, Nantwich, on Tuesday 23 January at 11pm. Donations in his memory to (The) Treasures. World Orthopaedic Association, 35-43 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London WC2A 3PN. Any enquiries to E.J. Tredder and Son, Funeral Directors 01270 626653.

RASCHID: Fatima (Daw Thouny Mary), aged 85, in Quincy, Pennsylvania, on Tuesday 16 January 1996, beloved wife of the late Burmese Muslim leader U Raschid. Indefatigable champion of the poor, the sick and the oppressed; President of the National Council of

Births, Marriages & Deaths

Women in Burma. Mother of Mr B. Raschid, architect, of Midway, Virginia, and Dr Salim Raschid, psychiatrist, of Hampstead, London. Greatly adored mother, grandmother and great grandmother. The *Janmaw* (funeral) will take place. God willing, in Karachi, Pakistan - where she will be laid to rest beside her husband, *Rachmawallah-dalilawna*; may the mercy of God be upon them. For further information contact Mrs Rose Raschid (Daw Tin Tin Sam) at the Burmese Section, BBC World Service: 0171-257 1545.

WEBB: Kaye, Puffin peacefully on 16 January 1996. Dearly loved mother of John and Kate and devoted grandmother of Danny. Private family funeral. All enquiries to R.E. Sherry, 75 Bell Street, London NW1, 0171-723 0425. A Memorial Service will be arranged for later in the year.

Announcements for Gazette BIRTHS, MARRIAGES & DEATHS should be sent to writing to the Gazette Editor, The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL. Telephone 0171-293 2011 or faxed to 0171-293 2010, and are charged at £6.50 a line (VAT extra).

Changing of the Guard The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment, the Queen's Life Guard at Horse Guards, London W1, at President of France, Jacques Chirac, visits Kensington and Chelsea Palace.

Birthdays

Chief Emeke Anyaoku, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, 63; Air Marshal Sir Alfred Bell, 72; Mr Robert Banks MR 59; Mr Peter Beardsley, footballer, 35; Dr David Bellamy, botanist, 63; Mr John Boorman, film director, 63; Mr Raymond Briggs, author and illustrator, 62; Mr David Burke, Chief Constable, North Yorkshire, 57; Mr John Carr, former Chairman, Countryside Commission of Scotland, 69; Mr Kevin Costner, actor, 41; Mr Richard Durwood, jockey, 32; Mr Christian Fittipaldi, racing driver, 25; Sir Rocco Forte, chief executive, Forte, 51; Mr Paul Freeman, actor, 53; Sir William Goldsmith QC, 63; Mr Berthold Goldschmidt, composer and conductor, 93; Mr David Grant, Lord-Lieutenant of County Durham, 74; Miss Dawn Guinness, former Headmistress of Fetteschool, 50; Mr James Ham, chairman, Scottish Nuclear, 63; Sir William Harding, former diplomat, 69; Mr Robert Hiles MR 58; Mr Terence Higgins MR former Olympic athlete, 68; Mr John Hougham, chairman, ACAS, 59; Mr David Howell MR 60; Mr John Hume MR 59; Mr Ed Logan, former diplomat, 79; Dame Jennifer Jenkins, former Chairman, the National Trust, 75; Mr Paul Keating, prime minister of Australia, 52; Mr Martin Laing, chairman, John Laing, 54; Sir Godfrey Le Queux, Judge of Courts of Appeal, Jersey and Guernsey, 72; Sir Peter Preston, deputy chairman, Care Britain, 74; Sir Nigel Strutt, farmer and landowner, 80; Sir Walter Verco, former secretary, Order of the Garter, 89; Sir Ralph Varney, former Vice Lord-Lieutenant of Bucks, 81; Sir Clive Whitmore, former Permanent Under-Secretary of State,

Home Office, 61; Sir Alan Whitmore, former director, Exchange and Telecommunications Dept, IMF, New York, 70.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Peter Mark Roger, lexicographer, 1979; Alan Alexander Miller, author, 1982; Arthur Mitchell Ransome, critic and writer, 1984; Oliver Norvell Harris, comedian, 1992; Cary Grant (Archibald Alexander Leach), actor, 1904. Deaths: Joseph Rudyard Kipling, author, 1936; Sydney Greenstreet, actor, 1954; Hugh Todd Naylor for Gaiskill, statesman, 1963; Sir Cecil Walter Hardy Beaton, designer and photographer, 1980. On this day: Henry VII of Lancaster and Elizabeth of York were married, 1486; the *Germans Reich* was proclaimed in the Hall of Mirrors at the Palace of Versailles, 1871. Today is the Feast Day of St Peter's Chair, Rome, St Desle or Deslois, St Prisca or Priscilla and St Volusian.

Lectures

Tate Gallery: Colin Self talks about his work, 1pm. National Portrait Gallery: Andrew Logan, "An Artistic Adventure", 1.10pm. Centre for Economic Policy Research Lecture, Royal Society, London SW1: Dani Rodrik, "Growth Policy: getting interventions right; how South Korea and Taiwan grew rich", 1.30pm.

Professor James Meade

A celebration of the life and work of Professor James Meade will be held on Saturday 2 March 1996 at 2.30pm in the chapel of Trinity College, Cambridge.

Director responsible for company's negligence

LAW REPORT

18 January 1996

Williams and another v Natural Life Health Foods Ltd and another; Queen's Bench Division (Mr Justice Langley); 1 December 1995

A director of a company was personally liable to the plaintiffs for the loss caused by the company's negligent misstatement where, although the director had no direct contact with the plaintiffs, the company was selling his personal experience and skill and he could be taken to have assumed a personal duty to the plaintiffs.

Mr Justice Langley gave judgment for the plaintiffs against the second defendant in the sum of £84,641.

The plaintiffs entered into a franchise agreement relating to the operation of a health-food shop with the first defendant company of which the second defendant was the owner and managing director. The company's brochure described its experience and expertise in establishing a viable franchise business as based on the second defendant's experience.

Financial projections were provided for the plaintiffs. The plaintiffs did not deal with the second defendant but expected the projections to have his personal stamp of approval. For

the 18 months of the shop's operation as a franchise, it achieved a turnover of £248,000 against the projection of £430,250 and a loss of £38,600 against a projected profit of £30,000. The plaintiffs' net capital loss from investing in the business amounted to £84,641.

The defendant company had been dissolved and the plaintiffs pursued their claim in negligence against the second defendant.

Mr Justice Langley said that the first issue was whether the defendant company was itself liable to the plaintiffs by making negligent misstatements or giving negligent advice in the projections. The company was in a relationship with the plaintiffs in which its advice on the financial viability of the proposed franchise was a vital part of the service it offered and it knew and intended that that advice would be relied on by the plaintiffs.

The sales projections proved to be very seriously overstated. The company was in breach of its duty of care to see that the projections given to the plaintiffs were correct or properly and reasonably prepared.

The most important issue was whether the second defendant was personally liable to the plaintiffs. It was clear from the authorities that the fact that a director was the effective controller and owner of a company was insufficient of itself to fix him with a personal liability for torts committed by the company and that what was required for such liability was that the director must have expressly directed or procured commission of the tortious act.

He was entitled not to be deprived of the benefit of limited liability when acting in the business of the company. It was personal responsibility for the tort, not the company, which was required to render a director liable.

To find the second defendant personally liable he must therefore have directed or procured the production of the projections to the plaintiffs in circumstances where he was personally negligent in doing so, or he must have assumed a personal responsibility to the plaintiffs for their preparation with reasonable skill and care, notwithstanding that the plaintiffs were dealing with the company.

It was important that what the company had to sell was the second defendant's personal knowledge and skill. On the totality of the evidence, with a business which was based and presented as being based on the second defendant's personal expertise and experience, the second defendant did assume, and was reasonably to have been taken to have assumed, a personal duty to the plaintiffs.

Although there was little direct contact between him and the plaintiffs, the totality of the evidence established that the second defendant had personally directed the presentation to the plaintiffs of the projections or assumed a personal responsibility to the plaintiffs for them, and he did that in the knowledge that the plaintiffs would rely on the projections and his personal knowledge and experience.

Ying Hui Tan, Barrister



The Chechens

The name comes from a village where a famous battle took place between the Russians and the Chechens in 1732. The Chechens call themselves Nokhchi. The society at that time was remarkable for its lack of class distinctions: there were no differences in rank apart from those of age. Chechens converted to Islam in the 17th century. They number almost a million – mostly within the borders of Chechnya itself, but

with a large population living in Moscow, and 25,000 living in Turkey (hence this week's seizing of a Turkish ferry). Chechen mafias played a key role in the mafia turf wars that erupted in Moscow after the collapse of Communism. To some extent, the widespread Russian perception of "every Chechen a gangster" has been encouraged by the Kremlin itself, keen to stoke the fires of resentment against the upstart nation.

The history

The Russians have never had a happy relationship with the Chechens, to put it mildly. In 1814, the Russian governor of the Caucasus warned Tsar Alexander I that the Chechens, "by their example of independence, can inspire a rebellious spirit even among the most faithful subjects of the empire". Consequently, the governor said, he "would find no peace while a single

Chechen remained alive". The Chechens continued to resist Tsarist occupation at a time when other nations in the Caucasus had knuckled under. Throughout the war of the Caucasus, from 1817 to 1864, the region did not come fully under Moscow's control. Tolstoy, based on his experiences as a soldier in the Caucasian wars, wrote: "No one spoke of hatred of the Russians. The feeling experienced by all the Chechens from the youngest to the oldest was stronger than hate." The last 19th-century Chechen rebellion was in 1877. But the Bolsheviks found it almost as difficult as the Tsarists to subdue the Chechens. Promises of independence were quickly forgotten after the Russian revolution of 1917 (history would repeat itself when the Soviet empire collapsed more than 80 years later). The Republic of the North Caucasus Mountains brought together the Chechens and half a dozen

other Caucasian nations, but outside the newly created Soviet Russia. However, Stalin had little time for Chechen aspirations for independence. In 1934, the Chechen-Ingush Autonomous Region (later an autonomous republic) was created, firmly within the Soviet embrace.

The Chechen refusal to be nailed down by Moscow was as strong as ever. Officially because they had collaborated with the Nazis – in reality, as punishment for their national aspirations – Stalin ordered mass deportations of the Chechens in 1944. Chechnya's inhabitants were rounded up and deported en masse to Siberia and Kazakhstan; nearly half the population died. This wound has never healed. In 1957 Khrushchev's de-Stalinisation of the Soviet Union got under way and Chechens were allowed to return to their homeland. Things remained resolutely quiet for the next 30 years.

Research by Ben Summers

Who are these people?



Are there other Chechnyas waiting to happen?

The Caucasus is full of unexploded time bombs. There has been a clutch of wars in the past few years, including in Abkhazia, a breakaway region of the former Soviet republic of Georgia, and between the Armenians and Azeris, over the enclave of Nagorno Karabakh, in Azerbaijan. The huge number of different ethnic groups means that each sub-division and declaration of independence is liable to be followed by a sub-sub-division, by yet another

threatened minority. Chechnya's neighbour, Dagestan, remains unstable, and violence continues in nearby Ossetia.

Further afield, the closest potential equivalent to Chechnya is the republic of Tatarstan, in central Russia, which declared independence from Moscow, but which has theoretically reached an accommodation with the Kremlin. It is unclear whether the long-term danger of violence has been averted.

How they make their living:

Oil holds the key. Chechnya has its own oil wells and refineries. But more significant is an oil pipeline running through Chechnya from the Caspian Sea to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiisk, and thence to the West. Some argue that this pipeline was the reason Russia wanted to fight the war in the first place. Others argue that the war had more to do with Russia's sense of national importance, and its indignation at being humiliated by a smaller, breakaway nation. Chechnya is still heavily agricultural. The other main industries are natural gas, food processing and furniture. Muscovites are fond of claiming the Chechens are at the heart of the arms trade across the former Soviet Union.

Ploughing tea-fields (above) in the 1940s. Chechen fighter (far right) Dzhokhar Dudayev (above right)



Are they war-mongering gangsters or oppressed freedom fighters? **Steve Crawshaw** provides a complete guide to the Chechens

The political background

Political parties are virtually non-existent. Clan loyalties are still important. The Chechens' main leader, now holed up in the hills, remains the former Soviet air force general, 52-year-old Dzhokhar Dudayev, who was elected in 1991. With his pencil moustache and absurdly grand manner, Dudayev seemed, until the invasion of Chechnya, to be an almost laughable figure. But the invasion raised local sympathy for him, even

among those who had been critical of his megalomaniac tendencies. Dudayev was based in Estonia, where he headed an air base in the town of Tartu. He shot to prominence when he refused to fire on pro-independence campaigners in the Baltic states. Aslan Maskhadov, the Chechen rebel military commander, also plays an important role. He warned yesterday that the Chechens might spread their war further into Russia proper.

Theoretically, Chechnya held elections at the same time as the rest of the Russian Federation last month. But these elections had little real effect on the country's chaos: rebels seized Gudermes, Chechnya's second town, on the day voting began. Doku Zavgayev, the Kremlin's favourite candidate, was said by Moscow to have won overwhelmingly. But the turnout was reckoned by independent observers to have been very low.

One man who hopes he still has a political future in the region is the Chechen Ruslan Khasbulatov, the former speaker of the Russian parliament, who moved from being Yeltsin's main ally (during the anti-Gorbachev coup of August 1991), to becoming his main opponent (in the president versus parliament battles of the next two years). Such are the twists of Chechen politics that he is regarded as a potential Kremlin ally against Dudayev.

Conflict after Communism

The Chechens declared independence in 1991, at a time when declarations of independence were multiplying across the Soviet Union. When Mikhail Gorbachev was still in the Kremlin, Boris Yeltsin was in favour of people helping themselves to as much independence as they wanted. But when Mr Yeltsin himself became the ruler of the Kremlin, he soon changed his tune. The first sign of the new policy came in November 1991, when the Soviet Union had not yet officially collapsed. Mr Yeltsin sent hundreds of troops in against the Chechen pro-independence leadership, led by Dzhokhar Dudayev. In the next three

years there was a stand-off between the two sides. Dudayev proclaimed his country's independence though in practice he gained almost nothing. In December 1994, Russian troops moved in to crush Chechen independence. The Kremlin seemed to believe that it could carry out a surgical operation. In reality, it took until February 1995 to subjugate Chechnya entirely, in a bloody and misconceived operation. Tens of thousands, mostly civilians, are reckoned to have died. As the author Alexander Solzhenitsyn noted, in *Gulag Archipelago*, the Chechens were the only nation that "refused to accept the psychology of

submission". By the spring of last year, Grozny was, theoretically, in Russian hands but in reality a low-level guerrilla war was still going on. The Russians were hated as never before. In June, armed rebels stormed the southern Russian town of Budyonnovsk. Dozens of people died in a failed Russian rescue bid before the Chechen attackers were allowed to return home, humiliating Yeltsin. A peace deal was theoretically agreed in July, but neither side took the agreement very seriously. Indeed, the Chechen rebels became bolder as the year went on, culminating with the hostage crisis this week.



Musical chairs

Wanted: one chairman for institution without a home in 1997 and the subject of a less-than-complimentary fly-on-the-wall TV documentary. Candidate must be able to cope with being called elitist, out of touch and middle class.

It may not appear the most desirable job in the world; but the Royal Opera House will need a new chairman when the present incumbent, Angus Stirling, steps down this summer. And for all its pitfalls there will be no shortage of candidates for one of the establishment's top posts.

The name to watch for may be Gummer – not John, formerly John Selwyn of that name, but his brother Peter.



Gummer: sticky options?

Mr Gummer is known to be close to the Prime Minister, who must make this appointment. He is also chairman of one of the world's biggest PR companies, Shandwick plc. No problem there. His other role, though, may make things a bit sticky. He is, at present, chairman of the Arts Council's National Lottery Advisory Panel, the selfsame panel which recently awarded the Royal Opera House £78m. Some of the smaller arts organisations that have missed out on lottery money may feel aggrieved if the man who has doled out the cash to the Royal Opera House ends up taking the chairmanship there.

Quite what one of these fly-on-the-wall documentaries would make of it all, I can't think.

Song of praise

I notice that the BBC trailer for the France versus England game in Paris this coming Saturday is accompanied by the song Dominique, a one-hit wonder for The Singing Nun three decades ago. A BBC spokeswoman explained this curious choice: "We wanted to show that the French could do something not terribly well and not always be stylish. So we put



No faith in Belgian singing

on this very unhip piece of music which is in French. Only problem is, The Singing Nun was Belgian. So that's insulting the French as unstylish, and the Belgians by calling them French and describing their only British hit as unhip. After all that, let's hope we win the rugby.

Funny stalk

The comedian Lee Evans may have stumbled on a suitable



Lee Evans, an unlikely stalker

way to deal with that curious Nineties phenomenon, the stalker. The magazine *Time Out* reports that Evans spied Neil Sean, a chap who spends his time seeking out celebrities to have his picture taken with them. Evans told him he recognised him, which mortified Sean, who claimed indignantly, "But I'm supposed to be recognising you." This, I'm sure, would have been the best way to un-nerve the men following Madonna and Princess Anne – continually go up to them and hail them. A much more effective deterrent than a police caution.

Pet publisher

The publisher, Harper Collins, is not best pleased by the latest request from best-selling author of *The Joy Luck Club*, Amy Tan. She has refused to visit Britain to promote her latest novel, *The Hundred Secret Senses*, unless the publishers

find her a small dog as a companion.

Apparently back home in California Tan has acquired a small Yorkshire Terrier, known as Bubba, who travels everywhere with her. Whilst on tour he even gets his supper served off a silver tray.

She told her publisher she had almost decided not to come because she couldn't bring Bubba, but eventually decided that she could cope as long as a small British dog was found to keep her company.

The book is now on, although Harper Collins personnel department is not even sure that animals are allowed inside their building. "We prefer to water all the greenery in our atrium ourselves," one staff member observed.

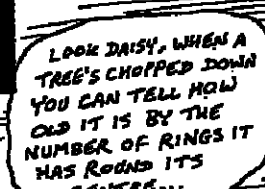
Out of a job

Michael Heseltine's premature announcement of the unemployment figures on Tuesday had one unfortunate result. Yesterday there were no staff manning the Department of Education and Unemployment's information line. Callers were met with an answering machine. "I can only conclude," said an annoyed Labour parliamentary candidate who had wanted to know the figures for his constituency, "that things are so bad that even the Civil Service has lost people."

Eagle Eye

Generation Why

by Tony Reeve and Steve Way



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ONE CANADA SQUARE CANARY WHARF LONDON E14 5DL
TELEPHONE 071-293 2000/071-345 2000 FAX 071-293 2435/071-345 2435

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Chechnya is not the West's cause

For two centuries Russia has struggled to impose its will upon the turbulent Caucasus: it is only with the violence of the past week that its vendetta against the Chechens has demanded the world's attention. It's probably a bit late to get morally high handed.

Yesterday the Russian Army was laying down another murderous artillery barrage quite likely to kill the Chechen gunmen and their innocent hostages in a village of southern Russia.

At the same time a small group of Chechens, or their supporters, were aboard a hijacked ferry, with another group of blameless victims, sailing along the Black Sea coast of Turkey with the intention of blowing up the vessel, its passengers and themselves in the Bosphorus.

The consequences of Moscow's war in the Caucasus have crossed the borders of Russia and that means two difficult issues must be confronted. The first is whether the brutal methods adopted to suppress the Chechen independence campaign should provoke sanctions from the West and, if so, in what form. The second is whether the ruthless Chechen tactics against civilians deny their movement political legitimacy and place the perpetrators among the ranks of international terrorists.

For Russia, the war in Chechnya was both a strategic necessity and a political disaster. Necessary, because in Russian eyes stability in the south could only be maintained by compulsion and because Russia's rulers want to control the region's oil resources, in particular a strategic pipeline running across the republic. It proved disastrous because the Russian armed forces displayed ineptitude and cruelty. Negotiations for a peaceful settlement had already faltered when Chechen gunmen committed their latest outrage. Boris Yeltsin was left with no policy other than a belated and barely credible show of strength. At the very least, Russia should be told by the West that a

political solution must be found to the Chechen conflict. The opportunity to convey that message will come as early as next week when the Russians apply to join the 38 nations of Council of Europe. It is not an application that should be readily accepted at the moment.

However, glibly condemning Russia's intentions in the Caucasus is a luxury. Not one foreign power formally endorses the pretensions to independence of a Chechen clique notable for gangsterism and corruption. Chechnya remains in international law a part of the Russian Federation. The awful example of Yugoslavia should be at the front of our minds whenever we are tempted to toy with encouraging the break-up of federations to create states based on ethnic identity.

Conflicts in the Caucasus have been typified by cruelty since the Imam Shamil sent his horsemen against the Czar's generals armed only with sabres. In 1943, the Chechens staged an uprising in support of Hitler's Wehrmacht when it reached the gates of Grozny. Stalin retaliated by deporting the entire population to central Asia.

The long local history of savagery means we should judge the hijacking of the Turkish ferry for exactly what it is – an act of terrorism.

Nor should any comfort be extended to any Chechens who imagine that by such acts they can replicate the cause of the Palestinians in achieving international involvement with their dispute. Neither history nor law are on their side. Chechen fantasies that the West might be persuaded to intervene on its behalf should be dispelled without further ado. There is already a mission to Chechnya, undertaken by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe. The West is right to complain about Russian methods but we have no interest in Chechen independence nor, as yet, in Yeltsin's defeat.

On your bike, Duchess

Yesterday the chief executive of Britain's most prestigious outfit got tough. She let it be known that the company was not prepared to bail out one of its most wayward loss-making subsidiaries. The word was that it was time for this particular offspring to stand on its own two feet and to take responsibility for itself.

In taking this line Her Majesty the Queen was exerting the leadership that the beleaguered monarchy requires from her. Delaying and downsizing is finally coming to the Royal Family, having swept through most other British corporations of note.

It started in 1993 when the Queen finally accepted the political importance of paying tax and did some long overdue thinning out of the civil list to remove extraneous hangers-on. Late last year she finally bit the bullet and stepped into her son's disastrous marriage by trying to procure a long-overdue divorce between the Prince and Princess of Wales. Now she has let the Duchess of York know that she is on her own with her debts.

Quite right, but rather late. It will seem incredible to most people that a woman in her mid-thirties can squander a huge separation settlement, substantial book royalties and a generous allowance for her children, and then go more than a million quid into the red.

It is some kind of testimony to the com-

pany that the Duchess of York keeps that she could be financially stretched and yet jet off for the kind of holidays and shopping trips that 99 per cent of her mother-in-law's subjects can barely imagine. There is a lack of realism and responsibility there that boggles the mind.

But Her Majesty must also ask herself how all this has come about. How did Sarah Ferguson come to expect the lifestyle of an international jetsetter, feeling little obligation to restrain her most extravagant impulses, while rendering precious little public service?

Presumably she did it because that is still the way that a substantial part of Britain's Royal Family and its entourage lives. With their huge his-and-hers country estates, several holidays a year in Klosters or Mustique, state-of-the-art Range Rovers, education at Eton, polo-playing (is there nowhere a prince who likes soccer?) and helicopter-flying, the royals have not been part of Britain but apart from it, yet without gaining any gravitas or authority.

The time has come – and almost everybody sees it – for a more democratic monarchy. To survive, the monarchy must reflect back to us the virtues that we most respect – not the lifestyle that we most envy. Otherwise, the company may one day go bust, something the chief executive seems to have realised.

Inside story: a living, breathing miracle

Today, a very special and rather magical story.

"It's a miracle!" said the doctors.
"It's a miracle!" said the mother.
"It's a miracle!" said the prison governor.

And at first sight it did seem like a miracle. A baby boy was born to a female prisoner in one of our biggest women's prisons. That in itself was not a miracle. But shortly after the birth took place it was realised that the baby was wearing tiny chains and a small manacle, just like his mother. That was surely a miracle.

"There is no case on record of a baby being born wearing any kind of accessory, fashion or otherwise," said a rather shaken chief government health officer. "Babies have always been born totally unadorned. This is quite unprecedented."

The government chief medical officer spoke as if he had done some heavy research into these things, whereas all he had done was ring an old obstetrician pal and ask him if babies were ever born with accessories. "Yes," said the pal, drily. "These days they sometimes appear with drug addictions inherited from their mums and start having withdrawal symptoms... Is that the sort of thing you were thinking of?"



MILES KINGSTON

It was not. He was thinking more of things like chains and manacles. "Sort of punk birth?" said the obstetrician. "New one on me."

"There's a rumour going round," said the chief medical officer, "that because the mother had regularly been chained and shackled, the child has inherited these characteristics. Now, this is plainly impossible, but that is what people are saying."

"Then people are talking through their hats," said the obstetrician. "The mother, however, was not convinced."

"It's a miracle!" she said. "This is a very special baby. I'm going to have him christened Michael Howard."

"Is there a special reason for this?" asked a journalist, who had been allowed in on condition that he was chained to a security guard.

"Yes," she said. "I just feel very grateful to the Home Secretary for

having allowed this miracle to take place. If it hadn't been for him, I might have aborted. Run away. Sheddaddled. I might have just cleared off and committed my offence again."

"What are you actually inside for?" asked the journalist.

"Non-payment of TV licence fines," said the mother. "I persistently failed to buy a TV licence because I couldn't afford it, and they fined me, and I couldn't pay, and so they put me in prison and quite right, too, because it's taught me a lesson."

"What lesson has it taught you?"

"That Michael Howard is absolutely right. That prison does work. That when you are in prison, society is protected from your urge to watch TV without paying a licence fee. You can't imagine the number of times I've had this urge to run out of prison and reoffend. Often, as I was led away to hospital for antenatal treatment, I have blessed the moment that Mr Howard ordered me to be chained."

Lord knows how near I was to running away and watching TV without a licence.

"But surely the Home Secretary wasn't thinking of prisoners like you when he issued those orders?"

"He must have been. Almost all female prisoners have committed offences like me."

"Do you think any other female prisoners will give birth to miracle babies?"

"It was at this point that the policeman, to whom the mother was now chained again, spoke up for the first time."

"Excuse me, but there is no miracle. This baby was not born with chains. They were put on him after the birth."

"By whom?"

"By me."

"Why?"

"Orders of the Home Secretary. All babies born in prison to be shackled until further notice."

"But the babies have committed no offence."

"No, but it diminishes the likelihood of the mother absconding if she would have to leave her baby manacled behind her. That is the Home Secretary's new official policy."

Disappointed at the melting away of the miracle, the journalist nevertheless contacted the Home Secretary for a comment. He got it.

"Chains work!" said the Home Secretary. "This proves it. People in chains do not escape. Shackles are good. If you chain everyone to something, no one can escape! In Saudi Arabia, they chop people's hands off! That works, too. Watch this space..."

Courts should decide life tariffs

From Mr Paul Cavadino

Sir: Only the courts can ultimately decide whether Lord Donaldson is right in questioning the legality of allowing "public confidence" to affect the length of life sentence prisoners' tariffs ("Law Lord revives row over life for Hindley", 17 January). However, under a system in which government ministers rather than judges make such decisions, there

is an inevitable risk that "public confidence" will be equated with considerations of electoral popularity and the volume of media protest. It is deeply disturbing that tariffs could be determined on this basis rather than on the merits of the case.

Setting a life-sentence prisoner's tariff is effectively a sentencing decision. It cannot be right for sentences to be decided by a politician under a private procedure which allows the prisoner no right to a hearing, to be present or represented during the

decision-making process, or to appeal. Such a process contravenes the fundamental principles of natural justice.

When life sentences are passed for offences other than murder, tariffs are set by the trial judge and are subject to appeal by either the defence or prosecution. The extension of the same procedure to life sentences passed in murder cases is long overdue.

Yours faithfully,
PAUL CAVADINO
Chair, Penal Affairs Consortium
London, SW9

Archers in a stew

From Mr Glyn Reed

Sir: Rather than promote Delia Smith and annoy Jill (letter, 16 January), perhaps Phil Archer should delve into Jennifer Aldridge's *Archers' Cookbook*. In it he will find lots of good wholesome cooking such as "Rich venison stew" or "Nanny Fargert's orange seed cake", both served at Lower Loxley Hall, Usha, I am sure, will give him a recipe for "Indian spiced lamb with raisins" and at Bridge Farm, Pat makes Tony a "Rich beef ragout" laced with alcohol. Then, while he is debating the benefits of English pudding rice with Betty, he could ask her for the recipe to "Betty's gooseberry, orange and mustard relish" or Mike's favourite, "Betty Tucker's budget bake".

Finally, if Phil is looking for reliability, Jean Paul, chef at Grey Gables, says of the book, "C'est magnifique! This charming collection of recipes is in the very best tradition of English cookery." Yours faithfully,
GLYN REED
Uffington, Lincolnshire

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. (Fax 071-293 2056; e-mail letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

TV solution for the World Service

From Mr Gerry Woolf

Sir: While the planned cuts in World Service expenditure are unfortunate ("Risked promises to keep 'beacon of freedom' alive", 17 January), surely it's time more money and effort was put into expanding BBC World-wide TV.

Stuck as I was in a hotel room in the US last week, I craved some decent programming and news coverage. The nearest thing intelligent Americans can find is PBS and the best programmes there are often from the BBC. And everyone knows CNN can't touch the BBC for breadth and depth of news coverage.

In India and the Far East, TV dishes are sprouting at a phenomenal rate. If the UK wants an influence in the world now and in the future, the medium of choice looks certain to be satellite and cable. The crackly old days of shortwave were appropriate for Britain's finest hour and the Cold War, but not the next millennium.

What's more, people are willing to pay a lot of money for the stuff. So World Service Television won't need a handout from the Foreign Office. That's got to be good for everyone, including the BBC.

Yours faithfully,
GERY WOOLF
Brighton

Foggy metres

From Mr Michael Jackson

Sir: I am delighted to note, at last, an example of metrication being of benefit to the consumer. Last winter, fog reduced visibility to 50 or 100 yards. This year the metric system has given us an improvement in visibility of almost 10 per cent. Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL JACKSON
London, E11
17 January

Conflict in Chechnya

From Dr David Spooner

Sir: The indiscriminate repression of Chechens by Russia may look very similar to the punitive expeditions mounted in the 19th century to secure the so-called Caucasus Line. After all, over a century and a half ago, and based at Fort Grozny, the author Mikhail Lermontov wrote home thus with an account of the battle of the River Valerik:

Imagine, that in the ravine where the fun was, it still smelt of blood an hour afterwards. I've entered into the taste for war, and I'm sure that for anyone used to this powerful experience there are few satisfactions that don't seem closing.

His *Hero of our Time*, Pechorin, ironically stood more aloof from the tribal inferiority-superiority syndrome towards what the Russians saw (and still see) as the underdeveloped group of "Circassians" than the militarised author.

However, today what we are witnessing is not merely a lesson in imperial discipline but a strategy of genocide – one stage further on from the recent ethnic cleansing in the Balkans.

Yours sincerely,
DAVID SPOONER
Dunfermline, Fife
17 January

From Mr Richard Barren
Sir: I am getting fed up with the pro-Chechen propaganda that is being put out by the media, for example Tony Barber's article and Phil Reeves's report in the *Independent* (16 January), as though it is a David and Goliath struggle.

The fact is that on two occasions, Chechen rebels have threatened to murder a hospital full of men, women and children. Can you imagine what reaction the IRA would get in the media were it to try similar tactics?

Can we not call terrorism what it is and lay off the kid-glove treatment?

Yours sincerely,
RICHARD BARRETT
Luton, Bedfordshire

Sensitive smells

From Mr Christopher M. Rogers

Sir: There is a precedent for sensors that detect human smell ("Security sensors sniff out 'potential intruders'", 15 January): the Americans dropped similar devices during the Vietnam war to detect guerrilla movements. Unfortunately for the Americans, the Viet Cong found that the detectors could be fooled simply by hanging containers of urine from the trees, and the scheme was not a success.

Let us hope the new devices do not suffer a similar fate, or it could make security guards' jobs even more unpleasant.

Yours faithfully,
CHRISTOPHER M. ROGERS
Edgware, Middlesex
15 January

Amen to all that

From Mr Ted Draper

Sir: Road signs relating to Sixties pop groups are nothing new (Home news, 10 January). I am always amused when driving to Bracknell from the southern end of the A329(M). At traffic lights there is a standard highway authority sign indicating a right turn to – Amen Corner. Yours sincerely,
TED DRAPER
Exmouth, Devon

The challenge of the Asian tigers: why Britain is looking east for ideas

Both Labour and Tories believe we could learn from Asian welfare systems, says **Nicholas Timmins**

For more than 20 years, Conservative politicians have tended to look west, to the United States, for ideas with which to reform the economy and the welfare state. More flexible labour markets, the purchaser/provider splits in health and social services, magnet schools and some of the tougher ideas touted for social security can all be traced back to American models or ideas.

It has been industrialists rather than politicians who have looked east, chiefly to Japan, for lessons on the production methods that made Japanese goods irresistible in the West.

Suddenly, however, both Conservative and Labour eyes are directed towards Asia. John Major has talked of Britain as the enterprise centre of Europe, drawing on the success of the Asian tigers. Chris Patten, Governor of Hong Kong, has been singing the virtues of the low-spending economies of Hong Kong, Korea, Malaysia, Taiwan and Singapore as a model for sluggish European countries.

Malcolm Wicks, Labour's newest social security spokesman, has been to Singapore as part of a social security select committee visit whose membership from the Conservative side included Bernard Jenkin. Chris Smith, Wicks's boss, is off on a similar round, with Tony Blair due in Singapore tomorrow. Conservative Central Office has been briefing its MPs after their visits, while the right-wing Adam Smith Institute has lit upon Singapore as a model for reconstructing Britain's welfare state.

Three items have grabbed attention: the dramatic growth of the tiger economies, their low levels of public spending – typically 15 to 20 per cent of GDP against Britain's 43 per cent – and funded welfare.

Furious debate surrounds how far their growth rates are the result of their relative under-development in an increasingly global and open market or a function of important policy and cultural differences. Backward countries can enjoy much faster growth rates as

they close the gap with the more developed world: this is certainly one of the factors in the growth rate experienced by countries such as China, Korea and Malaysia. But that cannot be the only explanation. Low public spending may well contribute, though on their own they are plainly not enough, otherwise Pakistan would be among the tigers. Compulsory saving schemes, infrastructure investment, a high premium on education, and social cohesion (although this is coming under pressure amid their rapid industrialisation) have played a part. The argument about low public spending and government taxes can be deceptive.

Some Asian tigers insist on high compulsory contributions to welfare funds which count outside public spending but to which dues have to be paid. "When you get to Singapore," Malcolm Wicks says, "they do have low levels of taxation and they tell you 'we don't believe in a welfare state'. But what they do have is the Central Provident Fund." This is a state-run fund in which both employers and employees are required to invest 20 per cent of wages apiece – 40 per cent of earnings. These compulsory contributions amount to a tax – but individuals own their savings account, a distinction which Bernard Jenkin says leads

to it being regarded vastly more favourably than Britain's tax-funded pay-as-you-go system, where today's national insurance contributions and taxes pay today's benefits, without being invested for the future. The fund provides pensions and much health care, and once a minimum level of provision has been reached it can be used for home purchase, education and much else. But it involves no redistribution from the better-off. It operates in a profoundly different society, where the safety net is closer to Britain's old Poor Law, with children expected to care for ageing parents before the family has recourse to state help. For any

thing like it to be adopted in Britain would involve massive transitional problems. For both Labour and the Conservatives the idea holds attractions. Labour would like to rebuild some form of social insurance, and the idea of funded schemes, state-regulated if not state-run, would be one route to do that without directly raising taxes. The Conservative right would see it as a route to privatising more welfare provision and making people more self-reliant. But for both, it is a scheme far easier to design from scratch than switch to from present tax-funded provision. Present contributors would be paying twice

– for their own future and to maintain present benefits. It would take years to build up big levels of benefit. It would load costs on to employers, and therefore jobs. It would, however, provide a bigger pool of savings for economic investment – an element that both sides find attractive – while raising questions about how far the state should compel people to plan for their future. The continuing dynamism of the East Asian economies suggests that the present interest in them will prove far more than a fad. It is a sure sign of the shift in global economic power that Messrs Blair and Major are now seeking inspiration from Asia.

How has Singapore achieved its dramatic economic success? Among those desperate to know is Tony Blair, who arrives there tomorrow in search of the secret. **Stephen Vines reports**

When China started timidly opening its doors to foreign investment and capitalist enterprise, one of the first high-level foreign advisers to be called in was Goh Keng Swee, the former First Deputy Prime Minister of Singapore and right-hand man to Lee Kuan Yew, the island state's strongman leader.

More recently Singapore has become a magnet for model-seeking leaders from the Western countries, including the Labour leader, Tony Blair, ever searching for new economic ideas, who will arrive at its showpiece Changi airport on Saturday.

This year, the 625sq km state, with a population of just under three million, officially joined the developed world with its admission to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). It has enjoyed spectacular growth for the better part of two decades, even though it is slowing now, as befits a developed economy whose people enjoy (on paper at least) a higher standard of living than those in far longer established developed nations such as Britain.

How has Singapore achieved this economic success? Is it because of authoritarian government, careful planning and the presence of a population imbued with the Confucian values of community spirit and obedience to a higher authority? Or is it because the spirit of free enterprise flourishes?

It is certainly not any simple and trite version of the latter. The Singapore that Lee Kuan Yew built was founded on state control. In the early days of nation-building, the government commandeered land for development, workers were kept in line by trade unions linked to the ruling party, the government spent what it had on building up the infrastructure, and once people started to have real money in their pockets the government quickly imposed compulsory saving by taking as much as 25 per cent out of wage packets and putting it into a fund that could not be touched until retirement.

The savings were channelled into investments that allowed the state to build an impressive

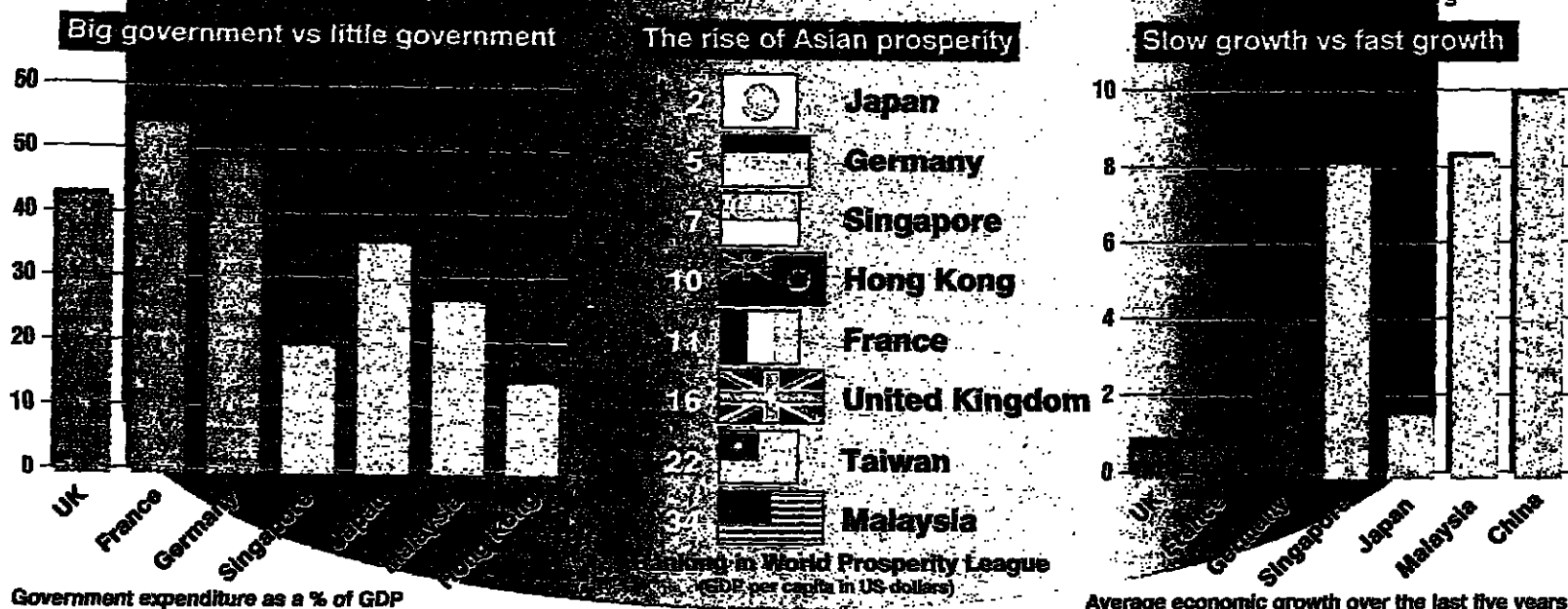
array of state enterprises, including a world-class telecommunications system and a first-class airline. A relatively small amount of this cash was poured into social services, which remain fairly basic.

The government believes in planning – indeed, planning is the core of the ruling People's Action Party ideology. Alongside planning are a raft of controls, sometimes imposed with a heavy hand but often with exquisite subtlety. In a memorable phrase, Mr Lee once described regulating bankers as being similar to "frying fish – it must not be overdone".

The problem for Singapore is that all its plans cannot create initiative: the government itself frequently laments that the country is desperately short of entrepreneurs and risk-takers. This well-regulated society runs efficiently, but on low-octane fuel. It is no coincidence that some of Singapore's more entrepreneurially minded business leaders have based themselves in Hong Kong, where they breathe a more bracing air.

The secret of Singapore's success has been its ability to attract ideas, capital and know-how from outside the country. Some of the world's leading companies are based there, and the nation makes them welcome by providing incentives for investors and creating an orderly base from which they can conduct their regional business.

Like a small company securing a niche in the market, Singapore has secured a niche as a service centre for a part of the world economy that needs to be in Asia. By definition, niches are hard to replicate – and that is why it is unlikely that the Singaporean model can be readily transplanted. Few countries are as small and as easy to control as Singapore; few have a population essentially built on well-motivated immigrants and the children of immigrants determined to better themselves; and few have a political leadership quite so determined to focus on economic development, even at the cost of diminishing personal liberty. As Lee Kuan Yew said back in 1966, "I have decided that we shall make and build and never give way."



DIARY

Scouting techniques

The great Girl Guiding mystery of Africa – a tale of religious fervour, political intrigue and sexual daring – has been solved. First, the President of Kenya was reported to have banned an "immoral" Guide handbook; an injured Guide Association promptly denied all knowledge of the offending manual, and an international hunt for the fiends who had dishonoured the ladies' good name was on.

Now Eagle Eye can exclusively reveal the culprits: that infamous band of scoundrels, the Boy Scouts. The Secretary General of the World Scout Movement, Dr Jacques Morillon, has come clean: "The Curriculum Guide and Resource Manual for Family Life Education is one of ours," he tells me from Geneva, "and it has caused me an enormous amount of bother."

First to complain about the lewd and libidinous tract had been the Vatican, which approached the doctor last summer. Soon, an unlikely alliance of Catholic and Muslim fundamentalists were burning the book, along with condoms, on the streets of Nairobi. After intimate examination, the 9th Africa Scout Conference last autumn declared the tome un-Scout-like and withdrew it.

What sordid sexual secrets could conceivably have caused such offence? Eagle Eye is intrigued. But modesty prevents good Scouts from divulging such smut. From New York to Nairobi, they blushing decline to enlighten me.

"It simply isn't proper to say," the doctor stammers.

"but the fact which I found most shocking was that no sense of scouting values appeared. Our leaders are supposed to impart values – not just, shall we say, techniques." Mercifully, the International Planned Parenthood Federation office in Nairobi was less coy. *Family Life*, I learn, instructs scout masters to teach their young charges that "sexuality is like a fine necklace with many beads", and that, should they contract a sexually transmitted disease, it is best not to "try and cure it themselves."

Why should all this concern the Kenyan president? President Daniel arap Moi is the country's Chief Scout.

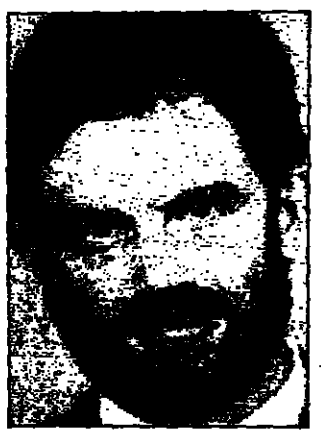


Silvana: It's all in a name

Gay abandon

One small mystery remaining from the David Ashby court case has been solved. I hear that a bemused black journalist asked the MP's wife, Mrs Silvana Ashby, why she had called

her dog Sambo. This was not, she replied, the dog's original name. "I called her Sappho," she said, "but then I discovered Sappho was a lesbian."



Blair: socialist stubble

On the chin

The Beard Liberation Front appears to be the first new party gearing itself up for a general election. The London-based organisation claims, with some cause, that beards have been inextricably connected with the cause of political progress and socialism, and denounces Tony Blair's clean-shaven revisionism. So here to give the BLF a happy new year is a vision of Mr Blair as a new, unshaven socialist.

Playing away

I see that John Major admits to staying away from his beloved Chelsea football club, as fellow fans have accused him of being a Jimmy. Supporters, even those who are not Conservative MPs, had been heard chanting "Go home, Major, we want to win."

But solidarity with the pariah prime minister comes from an unlikely quarter: fellow Chelsea supporter, Labour MP Tony Banks. "It's

probably the only occasion when I've actually felt sorry for him," Banks told me yesterday. "He is a genuine Chelsea supporter and his presence just coincided with a bad patch."

Never let parliamentary solidarity get in the way of superstition, however. Banks added: "I'm trying to encourage him to come back – but not till after the cup game on Sunday."

Skinfuls of success

If you wish Yehudi Menuhin's mother – 100 this month – a long and happy life, be sure to toss her some grapefruit. Her daughter-in-law, Diana, has written a profile of her in *The Oldie*, and attributes her longevity to "bathing in ice-cold water into which she has tossed two dozen bottlefuls of a very smelly drink called Kwass."

This would appear to be an invention of the good lady's. Diana Menuhin explains that her mother-in-law, Marutha, concocts a nostalgic version of the native beverage of her Crimean region "composed of mare's milk and God alone knows what else. She would from time to time prepare a batch of hermetically sealed bottles and submit a few gravely to us as though it were Holy Water."

Zapped

The late rock star Frank Zappa was no stranger to the bizarre. But could his imagination have dreamed up the following scene: a military band, dressed in post-Soviet uniforms, standing to attention in the swirling snow as the loudspeakers blare out

such seminal Zappa lyrics as "I'm a little pimp with my hair gassed back."

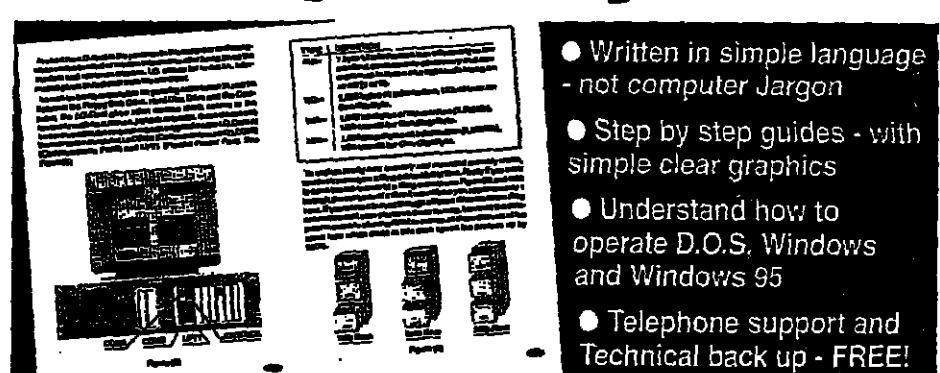
The occasion, before a crowd of 300, was the unveiling of a bust of Zappa in Vilnius by the Lithuanian Frank Zappa fan club (membership circa 20). The bust is covered by a parachute. As it is unveiled the parachute catches on Zappa's pony tail and has to be ripped off. At this moment of high drama, the military band strikes up *Rock Around The Clock*.

Eagle Eye



Rocking round the clock: Zappa Hayley Madden

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Banishment of a dissident

Britain's international reputation as a bastion for civilised values has suffered a damaging blow. In a country that led the campaign to abolish slavery, human rights are now up for sale. The price? A lucrative arms deal, oil and political friendship with a regime that still beheads and chops off the hands of its citizens.

This is the package the Saudi Arabian authorities offer Britain in exchange for sending Mohammed al-Masari into exile. A vociferous critic of the government in Riyadh, Mr Masari would certainly be locked up if he landed on Saudi soil, where he was imprisoned and tortured before he came here in 1994.

Yet the Home Office has decided that he is not entitled to refugee status. So, if the Government has its way, he will be sent to the tiny former British colony of Dominica in the Caribbean, which has promised him sanctuary. This is the other aspect of a putrid deal. As we reveal today, Dominica is providing a haven in exchange for British aid to support its banana industry which has been devastated by a hurricane. In short, we have in 1995 a modern version of the "triangular trade". Where once slaves, tobacco and manufactured goods were the wares involved, today it is arms, aid and Mr Masari.

The intention is clear: to despatch Mr Masari to a far-away island exile, where his political campaign against the rulers of Saudi Arabia will effectively be silenced. For this sort of treatment by Britain (and others), Napoleon had to prosecute a European war for 12 years. All Mr Masari has done is engage in a peaceful campaign against a medieval, absolutist monarchy.

It is not difficult to see why the British

authorities are anxious to be rid of this particular dissident. The Gulf kingdom is a lucrative market for British exports which are threatened by his presence here. John Major would not want the al-Yamamah arms deal, negotiated by Margaret Thatcher in 1985 and worth £20 billion, to be endangered. The Prime Minister is, no doubt, keen to send a friendly signal to Crown Prince Abdullah, who took over power on Monday from his ailing brother, King Fahd.

There was a time when Britain could be relied on to defend human rights, at least on our own soil, no matter what the price or the pressure from abroad. Fortunately, we still have a judiciary whose principles are not in hook to foreign regimes. Its task now must be, when Mr Masari appeals, to apply the law to overturn this rotten Home Office decision.

But the travesty of justice perpetrated against Mr Masari raises a wider issue. This case has demonstrated the urgent need to take the adjudication of asylum cases away from government officials, who cannot be relied upon to withstand political pressure. In Canada, for example, such cases have, since 1988, been decided by a quasi-judicial body, independent of the government and therefore free from interference.

If we had the same system here, the Saudis could protest as much as they liked, but the Government would be unable to engineer Mr al-Masari's eviction. And Britain's reputation as a liberal country would not now be in tatters because politicians bowed to the demands of arms dealers and one of the world's most autocratic regimes.

Grey water between Labour and Tories

Grey water is starting to appear between the Labour and Conservative parties, just as the battle for the general election starts to hot up. Both parties have stepped up their activity this week with advertisements in national newspapers. We could be in for 17 months of fierce campaigning on the hustings and hoardings across the country. With an adroit sense of timing, Mr Blair today imparted to Labour's position a new sense of clarity and distinctiveness in a speech in Tokyo.

The starting point for the two parties remains the same. Both now recognise the centrality of globalisation to the future of our economy and society. And both now accept that many of the changes in Britain in the Eighties were desirable.

But Mr Blair is seeking to define two clear areas of difference between Labour and the Conservatives. First, Labour has a distinctive approach to the labour market. Addressing an audience of Japanese businessmen, Mr Blair spoke of "a nation constantly investing... in the flexibility and aptitude of its people", where the engine of economic success is investment in human capital. In contrast, for the Conservatives the key is further deregulation of the labour market, together with cuts in taxation.

Neither case is entirely convincing as a recipe for economic growth. Labour has still to demonstrate why their proposals on training and lifelong learning will be any more successful than the Government's education policies in delivering improvements in productivity. And the Conservatives must explain why deregulation is the answer when companies

cannot hope to undercut the wages of developing countries.

Mr Blair argues that his second clear difference from Mr Major is his concern for social cohesion. Globalisation of markets is having damaging and divisive effects on British society. As low-skill jobs are increasingly displaced by workers in developing countries, a growing underclass could find themselves choosing between unemployment, abysmally low wages or crime. Labour has demonstrated considerably more concern for the welfare of those who are ill-equipped to deal with global change than the Conservatives. Whether or not Mr Blair can deliver policies on education or the welfare state that significantly ameliorate the problem remains to be seen.

Arguably, an interest in social cohesion is not distinctive to the Labour party. There are countless One Nation Tories who would surely agree with him. However, Mr Blair can claim the major credit for driving the one-nation agenda. First, he is trying to make the one-nation philosophy relevant to the problems and challenge of globalisation. And second, the one-nation voices in the Tory party are at continual risk of being drowned out by their more raucous right-wing colleagues.

Of course, there is still much common ground and overlap. The recent defections from the Conservatives by Emma Nicholson to the Liberal Democrats and Alan Howarth to Labour demonstrate just how fuzzy the boundaries have become. But in a general election, voters deserve a clear choice between distinctive, alternative prospective governments. And at last Mr Blair is starting to deliver.



'There you are, I've deported Mohammed al-Masari for you!'

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Self-assessment: good news or tax by stealth? Karl Marx in, al-Masari out

From Mr Michael Jack, MP

Sir: Your leading article "Hidden cost to the taxpayer" (3 January), about the effects of tax self-assessment, accuses the Government of subterfuge. The fact is that self-assessment is a major modernisation of tax administration. It was fully debated in Parliament in the 1994 and 1995 Finance Bills, when it was actually welcomed in principle by Labour. Since then the changes have been the subject of a massive consultation and public information exercise, on which all sectors of the business community have been fully and continuously involved.

There will be no hidden taxes. No double tax bills and no tax bombshells. The tax paid by business will be no more and no less than that due on the profits earned. The Red Book does indeed show that there will be an increase in business tax receipts expected in 1998-99. This is because of two factors: rising business profitability and bringing forward the moment when the tax bill has to be paid. However, the self-employed will still have up to 20 months after they have earned the profit to pay their final tax bill, once they receive their tax forms for completion.

Your leading article is plain wrong when it says that self-assessment is a job creation scheme for accountants. Tax itself is complicated—we live in a complicated world. But, if businessmen do not want to have to calculate their own tax payments under self-assessment, then they do not have to—the Revenue will do it for them.

In the longer-term, self-assessment represents a simplification of the tax system, particularly for the self-employed. The new system will do away with endless streams of estimated assessments, appeals, postponements and revised assessments, and will save self-employed businesses up to £250m in terms of compliance costs. It has already been tried with success on 5,000 real taxpayers in Leicester.

Yours sincerely,
MICHAEL JACK
Financial Secretary
to the Treasury
Treasury Chambers
London, SW1
3 January

From Mr Allan Black
Sir: I read with interest your article and leading article concerning the Government's decision to change the tax regime for those deemed self-employed. While I

share your views about tax increases by stealth, and the effect this change may have on the hitherto predictable voting patterns of the self-employed, one key point has been missed.

Tens of thousands of construction workers are also likely to be affected. Formerly, they were deemed self-employed for tax purposes and therefore paid gross; but, with effect from August 1998, they will be paid net. The Government's intention is to increase the tax "take" from this group.

Leaving aside the morality of yet another tax increase by stealth, the concern of the GMB, which represents 20,000 construction workers, is that many will feel forced to work illegally. Safety in the construction industry must be paramount—if thousands of workers choose for financial reasons (they face a 24 per cent cut) to take this dangerous route, then the Government's back-door tax increases may have disastrous consequences.

Yours sincerely,
ALLAN BLACK
National Officer
Construction Industry
GMB
London, SW19
3 January

From Mr Paul Dresch

Sir: The move to expel Mohammed al-Masari from Britain, at Saudi behest ("Anger as Saudi dissident is told to leave Britain", 4 January), sets a nasty precedent. Mr Masari has criticised the Saudi regime. This is not a crime in this country, at least not yet. He has not, so far as one knows, promoted violence of any kind or associated himself with those who do.

One need not agree with Mr Masari's views—I don't much myself—to argue that he has right to dissent from the views of his country's government, and indeed from those of the British government. If we could tolerate Karl Marx in Hampstead, we can tolerate Mr Masari in Willesden.

If rights of dissent and asylum are to be withdrawn at the behest of foreign governments, no mat-

ter that one might sympathise with their views, the very nature of the British state is implicated. Tolerance cannot depend on expediency.

Unless that is established clearly, relations with the Saudis will become more difficult. In the absence of clear principle, every difference that arises will appear to them mere perversity on Britain's part. The position of British ministers and ambassadors will become impossible.

The political argument may be finely balanced. But the principle at issue is more important by far. If that is surrendered, we will be on a slippery slope down which may slide more than the interests of Islamist dissenters.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL DRESCH
St John's College
Oxford

Power to the Unionists

From Mr Philip Goldenberg

Sir: From time to time, opponents of electoral reform point out how undesirable it would be if, as a consequence of its introduction, a minority party such as the Liberal Democrats "held the country to ransom" in a Parliament of minorities, as if such a situation could never arise under our beloved first-past-the-post electoral system.

At the last general election, the Liberal Democrats polled 17.9 per cent of the total votes cast in the UK on a widespread geographical basis, and won 20 seats. The Ulster Unionists polled 0.8 per cent of the total votes cast on a narrow geographical basis, and won nine seats.

The fate of the present government is now widely regarded as dependent on the Ulster Unionists, with all the difficulties that this may entail for the peace process in Northern Ireland.

Moral: if we do have a Parliament of minorities, they should at least be representative minorities!

Yours truly,
PHILIP GOLDBERG
Woking, Surrey
4 January

Batting for Britten

From Mr Stephen Newbould

Sir: I feel moved, almost against my better judgement, to respond to Frederick Stocken's outburst against "modern music" ("Dear Bill Oddie", 4 January) in which he singles out with particular venom Britten and Birtwistle as bad and unpopular composers.

What is it about Mr Stocken's tirade that makes my hackles rise so much? Perhaps that he seems to be denying the genuineness of my own response to these composers' work. I have listened to, loved and been nourished by so much of their music, including the castigated Britten operas. I have not manufactured these responses. I have always found them mirrored in many of my fellow audience members.

I am baffled by Mr Stocken's implied assertion that this music is bad (and reviled by all but the politically correct), rather than simply not to his taste. It makes me want, however lamely, to shout a defence of art and reason. Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN NEWBOULD
Bearwood,
West Midlands
4 January

Reg Prentice's Tory precedent

From Mr Roland Freeman

Sir: In 1977, a former Labour Cabinet Minister, Reg Prentice, defected from Labour and joined the Conservatives. He did not resign his seat and fight a by-election. Indeed, the Conservative Party found him a safe seat, Daventry, for the 1979 election.

I was on the shortlist and the agent told me afterwards that Central Office had put "heavy pressure" on the constituency to select Mr Prentice. Subsequently, he was made a minister in Mrs Thatcher's first administration. I do not recall any prominent Conservative demanding that he should have fought a by-election in his Newham constituency as a matter of principle.

The vituperation heaped upon Emma Nicholson's head is obviously designed to frighten other moderate Tory MPs from abandoning ship, but for Conservative MPs to argue that resigning her seat is the "honourable" thing to do is simply humbug.

Yours faithfully,
ROLAND FREEMAN
Alderbury, Wiltshire
3 January

From Mr Peter Hutchens
Sir: Polly Toynbee complains that some of the attacks on Emma Nicholson were motivated by a dislike of women ("Why do they hate her so much?", 4 January). She may be right in other cases, but my *Daily Express* article, quoted no less than three times in the attached montage, cannot be criticised on these grounds.

I wrote of "her teenage grasp of political reality" and suggested that she sought the sweets of office and fame. I also said (indisputably, I believe) that "the poor woman has no idea what she thinks". I would cheerfully say the same about that poor man Alan Howarth, now pretending to enjoy himself in the same party as Dennis Skinner.

Yours faithfully,
PETER HUTCHENS
Editor,
Daily Express
London, SE1
4 January

Make it metric

From Mr Chris Keenan
Sir: Further to Carolyn Beckingham's letter (2 January), may I add an extra item to her wish list? "Let the signs be metric". This is 1996, after all! Yours,
CHRIS KEENAN
Liverpool

How an electro-techno freak got the beat

"You will never understand modern pop music if you persist in regarding it as music. Modern pop music is talked about as if it were music, but in reality things like house and acid jazz and hip hop have very few of the recognisable ingredients of music."

These startling words are those of Radley Stoke, Professor of Applied Popular Music at the University of Milton Keynes, who has been exploring for 10 years just why it is that young people become addicted to sounds that seem so unalluring to the rest of us.

"You mean, why young people like such terrible music?" smiles Professor Stoke. "Go on, say it! That's what you mean, isn't it? Well, of course, all generations have said this about their youngsters' taste in music, but this time it does seem to be different. For a start, you cannot imagine them liking it in 20 years' time. This is new. When the big band generation grew up, they didn't throw away their Benny Goodman, Bing Crosby and Glenn Miller records. They went on listening to them. They still do. When the rock 'n' roll generation grew up, who would have thought that 30 years on they would still be spinning their Rolling Stones platters



MILES KINGSTON

—do I have the lingo right? I fear I do not. But then, who ever thought the Rolling Stones would still be playing?

"However, with these new sounds, it is different. I cannot imagine somehow, and I may be wrong here, but I cannot imagine that in 20 years' time middle-aged people will assemble in their living rooms to nod to the flashing electro-techno machine sounds to which they raved in earlier days. And I use the word 'machine' advisedly. The one difference parents would notice now if they went to a modern bash is that there are no musicians, only machines. This is the first time in history that the musicians have vanished from music.

"Well, not quite true, perhaps, because in the olden days the aristocrats would hide the musicians in

a gallery so that they could be heard but not seen. Nevertheless, what people heard was recognisably produced by humans. Today's dance music is not. It is machine music. Drum machine, click machine, synthesiser, sampler—these are today's instruments. And none of them is played by a human being. If you have ever been to a rave, you will know that there is no relationship between the dancers and a bandstand, as there used to be. The dancers are now surrounded by the sound. They do not know where it is coming from. They let themselves be invaded. Or, more accurately, they give themselves up to it—it is as if they were plugging themselves into a vast electronic keyboard!"

But why? Why become part of a pinball machine when you could be enjoying music?

"I will tell you why," declares Professor Radley Stoke. "It is a parent substitute."

How's that again?

"It dates from early childhood. Have you noticed how children are carried around these days? Not in people's arms. Not in back packs. In front packs. Yes, they are suspended on their parents' chests, facing inwards. All they can see is the

underside of their parent's chin. All they can hear is the beating of their parent's heart, two inches away. I am convinced that this heartbeat runs through their childhood. Like aural breast-feeding. And they have being withdrawn from it so much that later on they find substitutes for it."

Substitutes? What substitute can there be for a parent's heartbeat?

"A personal stereo, of course. All those teenagers sitting in trains with

carphones clamped to their heads, listening to the beat—they are not listening to music! They are re-experiencing the primal heartbeat! And when they later go on to the rave experience, they are all recapturing their very early childhood together! What they think of as a thrashing, hopping, sophisticated beat—it is only mummy's heartbeat they are trying to call back to! They call it music, but in reality it is more like the noises that a hospital scanner will find in a human body, highly amplified."

Tell us more.

"I am sorry. To find out more, you must wait for my forthcoming TV Arena special, *Dancing With Mummy—the Story of Modern Dance Music*..."

I can't wait.

Post code

From Mr Fritz Siegel

Sir: No wonder the poor postman failed to redirect Jennifer Jarratt's letters (letter, 4 January) if she annotated them with messages that were "cryptic" and "more cryptic". My dictionary says cryptic means "hidden, secret, mysterious, enigmatic" not the same as terse, which she presumably meant. Yours faithfully,
FRITZ SIEGEL
Liverpool

Post letters to Letters to the Editor, and include a daytime telephone number. (Fax: 0171-293 2056; e-mail: letters@independent.co.uk) Letters may be edited for length and clarity.